

1993

The personal transformation process among female graduate students from Africa studying at Iowa State University

Miriam E. Chiza-Muyengwa
Iowa State University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/rtd>

 Part of the [Adult and Continuing Education Administration Commons](#), [Adult and Continuing Education and Teaching Commons](#), and the [Higher Education and Teaching Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Chiza-Muyengwa, Miriam E., "The personal transformation process among female graduate students from Africa studying at Iowa State University" (1993). *Retrospective Theses and Dissertations*. 10547.
<https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/rtd/10547>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Iowa State University Capstones, Theses and Dissertations at Iowa State University Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Retrospective Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Iowa State University Digital Repository. For more information, please contact digirep@iastate.edu.

INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. Each original is also photographed in one exposure and is included in reduced form at the back of the book.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

UMI

**A Bell & Howell Information Company
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
313/761-4700 800/521-0600**

Order Number 9518367

**The personal transformation process among female graduate
students from Africa studying at Iowa State University**

Chiza-Muyengwa, Miriam E., Ph.D.

Iowa State University, 1994

U·M·I
300 N. Zeeb Rd.
Ann Arbor, MI 48106

The personal transformation process among female graduate
students from Africa studying at Iowa State University

by

Miriam E. Chiza-Muyengwa

A Dissertation Submitted to the
Graduate Faculty in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department: Professional Studies in Education
Major: Education (Adult and Extension Education)

Approved:

Signature was redacted for privacy.

In Charge of Major Work

Signature was redacted for privacy.

For the Major Department and Education Major

Signature was redacted for privacy.

For the Graduate College

Iowa State University
Ames, Iowa

1993

Dedicated To

My late father and my mother
who taught me the importance
of hard work and perseverance

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION	1
Problem Under Investigation	2
Background Information	3
General Overview	6
Limitation	9
Design of Study	10
Definition of Terms	10
Significance of Study	11
Organization of Study	13
CHAPTER II. LITERATURE REVIEW	15
Migration	16
Culture Shock	19
U Curve Adjustment	21
The Reverse U Curve Adjustment	24
Other Studies on International Students	25
Transformative Theory	32
Conclusion	40
CHAPTER III. RESEARCH DESIGN	43
Rationale for Using Qualitative Research	43
Population	45
Sample Size	46

	Page
Interview Schedule	47
Conclusion	50
CHAPTER IV. DATA ANALYSIS	51
Decision Making	52
Negotiating Two Cultures	60
Building Support Network	70
Community Experiences	74
College Experience	78
Resolving Issues/Coping	92
CHAPTER V. DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH	100
Discussion	102
Theoretical Implications	107
Implications of Study	110
Some Suggestions for Easing the Transition	111
Recommendations	111
Concluding Thoughts	112
REFERENCES	115
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	121
APPENDIX A. HUMAN SUBJECTS APPROVAL FORM	122
APPENDIX B. LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS	126

	Page
APPENDIX C. INTERVIEW SCHEDULE	128
APPENDIX D. CONSENT FORM	130
APPENDIX E. POSITIVE/NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF STUDY	132

CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

Human beings are engaged in all kinds of efforts to make this world a better place. These efforts include assessing needs, formulating policies, passing laws, delivering programs, managing people and resources, providing therapy, developing communities, changing organizational culture, educating students, intervening in conflicts and solving problems (Patton, 2nd Ed., 1990). These efforts occur at different times and levels in people's lives. It is impossible for any individual to shield themselves from circumstances and life changes that necessitate the development of new competencies. In his book on Adult Learning Methods, Galbraith (1990) suggests that any educational activity should promote and encourage development which should provide for growth and change.

My exposure to transformation theory through an adult education seminar provided for growth and change in me. It prompted an interest of investigating how female graduate international students at Iowa State University undergo transformations. According to Karpiak (1981), the transformation process deals with the experience of shock or inner turmoil, self reflection, making hard choices and finally, an integration of that experience. The individual emerges with a different view of self and of their world. As an international student studying at Iowa State University, I have come to the realization that my studying abroad has brought about a change in the way I perceive life in general. I, like many other international students, have had to reevaluate the different situations and

circumstances in which I found myself socially, culturally, and educationally, and had to adjust accordingly in order to live and to be able to accomplish my goals. This study investigates the idea that there is a transformation that takes place as female graduate international students adjust to life in United States colleges and universities. The study will examine the precursors of transformation, how it takes place and what happens after a transformation occurs. Some general areas of consideration for the study include why people choose to come to the states, their expectations versus what they actually experienced, problems encountered and how they resolved them.

It is proposed here that a personal transformation takes place in female graduate international students as they adjust and adapt to the new situations in which they find themselves. From this assertion, I developed the following questions for research:

- What happens to female graduate international students when they migrate to a culture different from their own?
- What are some of the problems they encounter in their new environment and culture?
- How do they go about resolving the encountered problems in order to achieve their goal(s)?

Problem Under Investigation

This assertion that a personal transformation takes place can be likened to perspective transformation as defined by Mezirow (1981). He defined it as "the emancipatory process of becoming critically

aware of how and why the structure of psycho-cultural assumptions has come to constrain the way we see ourselves and our relationships, reconstituting this structure to permit a more inclusive and discriminating integration of experience and acting upon these new understandings" (p. 6). He suggests that perspective transformation occurs in response to externally imposed disorienting dilemmas like divorce, death of a loved one, migration, change in job status and many others.

Disorienting dilemmas, such as divorce, death of a loved one, migration and many others, and how one tries to resolve them form the basis of this study. When people migrate from one culture to another, several things take place. One of these is that people become confused by the new culture and environment in which they find themselves. Although Mezirow's theory does not include cultural change, this study was very much imbedded in the culture in which it occurred.

It is proposed here that during their studies at institutions of higher education in the United States, female graduate international students experience some transformation. This transformation involves adjusting and adapting to the new culture and environment in order for them to achieve their goals.

Background Information

For many of the international students, studying abroad is viewed as a great opportunity to advance oneself. In many developing countries the educational system is designed to educate only a few

fortunate students. These systems dictate who can attend elementary school, secondary school and later higher education.

Equality of education for women suffers not only from lack of access to schooling but also from restrictive stereotypes outside of school and in the education process itself. Stereotypes of what is "natural and acceptable" for each sex creates subtle barriers to the full development of intellectual abilities even when academic access is unlimited. The socialization process begins at the earliest ages within the family and community. Culturally imposed sex roles and constraints shape self images, attitudes, and ambitions. The process is common to all societies, although much more rigidly observed in some. In general, girls are expected to be passive and obedient; boys active, competitive and combative. Modern media of communication tend to reinforce sex stereotypes by advertising that consistently identifies women with household cleaning products, men with machinery and advanced technology. This is especially true in developing countries where male domination is the rule of the day, and a woman's place is in the home and is expected to be subserviant. Fewer females than males enter educational programs, be they formal or nonformal; fewer receive technical and vocational training; women account for a very small proportion of the enrollment in postsecondary education (Kelly, 1981). Women's struggle for equal status takes many different forms in different parts of the world. At the most basic level, the aspirations of women in one country are not unique in comparison to those of women in any other country: equality under the law; improved

health and education; control over childbearing; and access to the full range of opportunities to explore individual potential.

In this study the African countries of Cameroon, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, the Republic of South Africa, the Sudan, Zambia and Zimbabwe are represented. These countries were represented here by at least one female graduate student. The male/female ratio for these African countries at Iowa State University was two men to one woman in most cases. This is consistent with Sivard's (1987) statistics in "WOMEN . . . a world survey," where she states that "developing countries in general reveal greater sex inequalities in education than do the developed. At successively higher educational levels inequality becomes more pronounced. At university level in Third World countries men outnumber women almost two to one" (p. 19).

This educational inequality is an incentive for many female students from developing countries to seek alternatives to fulfill their educational quest. Even though many women would welcome the opportunity to study abroad, their access to resources for international study is very limited. Most of the programs are run by men. The majority of people who already have first degrees from the local universities are men, and they are already working within the system. Thus, it is easier for men to have access to resources than women, and this accounts for the disparity between men and women. The struggle for political liberation and against economic depression are contributing factors for international students' desires to better themselves. Many are in search of a better life educationally,

socially and politically. Getting a chance to come to the United States is regarded as a great opportunity to liberate oneself from culturally-based customs which oppress women. The way the United States is portrayed in movies and on television showing such things as people driving luxurious cars, everyone seeming to have lots of money and a freer sexual expression are a few of the things that entice people to have the desire to experience such a life.

However, many students fail to realize how traumatic it can be for them to leave their own country only to find themselves in a totally different environment and culture. Authors such as DeVryer (1989) discuss how migration has a profound impact on a person's life. DeVryer holds that leaving one's country sets in motion a mourning process similar to that which occurs after losing a loved one.

Another experience stemming from migration is culture shock which Foust (1981) defined as the feeling of frustration and anxiety that arises when familiar cultural cues are suddenly removed and replaced by new, seemingly bizarre behavior.

General Overview

Over the past few decades there has been a rapid increase in the number of international students coming to study in the United States (Leong & Sedlacek, 1989). According to a Higher Education General Information Survey (1984), 86,000 citizens of foreign countries enrolled as first time students at American institutions of higher education. It is also reported that the number of foreigners studying on American campuses has ballooned from 47,000 in 1955 to 336,000 in

1988. Over the same period, the number of institutions enrolling foreign students grew from 1,500 to 2,500. Thus many foreign students are coming to the United States for educational purposes. Goodwin and Natch (1983) predicted that the enrollments would be more than 1 million by the 1990s and that international students would constitute more than 25% of the graduate student enrollment.

Generally speaking, host institutions take steps to provide for the academic needs and the cultural adjustments necessary when international students arrive on U.S. campuses. These actions, as documented by Marks (1987), are intended to embrace several aspects of the student's life:

- to help international students feel secure and gain a sense of belonging while in the host country;
- to encourage them to recognize the ambivalence they feel about unfamiliar cues to responsibility, authority and autonomy in their own study programs;
- to emphasize the importance of making their experiences educationally meaningful for their own personal growth;
- to prevent them from losing their own identity as members of their home culture while trying to establish social and professional relationships in the host country; and
- to prepare international students for the cultural and professional adjustments they will face when they return to their respective home countries (p. 120).

However, Marrelene Hughes, vice president for student development at the University of Toledo, was quoted in the Chronicle of Higher Education (1990) as saying that, "Beyond the logistics--picking them up at the airport, helping them with visa problems, and giving them the campus tour--many universities don't do very much" (p. A36). Some students say that the orientation sessions and campus tours offered to foreign students are bewildering (Dodge, 1990).

According to Wahidy (quoted in Dodge, 1990), international students say they have trouble finding their own niches at colleges because American social customs often clash with their own traditions. Orientation sessions, for instance, often do not help students understand that friendships in America generally are made quickly, but sometimes are not as deep and long-standing as friendships in other countries. Even body language is different; Americans tend to stand further from each other when talking than do people from some other countries. Miller (1981) pointed out that many international students experience a painful period of adjustment. Some characteristics of this period are identified as vulnerability, loneliness, loss of identity, helplessness, fear, bewilderment, hostility and alienation.

This study is composed of graduate women from selected different countries of the African continent, who, for some reason or another, decided to pursue higher education in the United States. Even though these women are all from Africa, they have some similarities and most importantly differences that should be considered when designing programs for them. Some important differences are in the area of

religion, the colonizing power and the educational system. Of the nine countries included in the study, Cameroon is the only country that was colonized by the French. The rest of the countries were British colonies, thus, their educational system is British-oriented. Egypt is the only predominantly Moslem country. Ghana, Nigeria, the Sudan, Kenya, and Cameroon have religious differences in that they are half Christian and half Moslem. These religious differences have been a source of hatred and fights. Women from the Islamic faith follow strict rules in regards to the way they dress and socialize with the other people. Christianity, on the other hand, is more liberal in that aspect. The three southern countries of Zambia, Zimbabwe, and the Republic of South Africa were all British colonies. Christianity is the predominant religion in south central Africa. These differences might be of importance in terms of how one adjusts to their new environment and culture.

Within this context of being a student, one cannot separate the social, cultural, and educational aspects of the environment as parts of the student's experience. How one reflects on who they are, what they would like to accomplish, and how they go about making the adjustment in order to fulfill their goals is the basis of this study.

Limitation

The results generated from this study cannot be overgeneralized to the population of female graduate international students from developing countries studying at other institutions of higher education in the United States of America.

Design of Study

The researcher's exposure to transformative theory triggered interest in how it would be useful in explaining the experiences of female graduate international students. Following formation of research questions, a list of female graduate international students was obtained from the international office at Iowa State University. Approval to proceed with the research was obtained from the Iowa State Human Subjects committee.

Letters were sent to potential participants to request their permission to be interviewed and to arrange for an appropriate meeting time. All the interviews were audio-taped after which they were transcribed. The data were analyzed using a grounded theoretical approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). A research report was written with conclusions and recommendations based on the study.

Definition of Terms

In order to provide common interpretations and understandings, the following definitions of the terms used in this study are provided:

adjustment - coping with one's environment sufficiently well to be happy, comfortable and free of problems (Pruitt, 1978).

adaptation - the ability of an individual to adjust to their surroundings in order to complete a desired goal or task (The Random House Dictionary of the English Language, 1987).

culture shock - a set of emotional reactions to the loss of perceptual reinforcements from one's own culture, to new

cultural stimuli which have little or no meaning and to the misunderstanding of new and diverse experiences when moving from one culture into another (Adler, 1975).

transformation - a change in essential nature of something or a change in its appearance (Griswold, 1982).

perspective transformation - is the emancipatory process of becoming critically aware of how and why the structure of psycho-cultural assumptions has come to constrain the way you see yourself and your relationships, reconstituting this structure to permit a more inclusive and discriminating integration of experience and acting upon these new understandings (J. Mezirow, 1993).

personal transformation - significant change within an individual which involves a restructuring of self.

international student - an individual from another country actively enrolled in a college or university in the United States.

migration - movement within one community, from one community to another in the same country, or from one community in one country to another community in another country (D. H. Friessm, 1974).

Significance of Study

By investigating the experiences these women had, the researcher can ascertain the impact of transformative learning in aiding growth and change. Educationally these experiences can assist institutions

of higher education in developing, planning, and implementing programs that promote growth and development. Secondly, the information gathered as a result of this research project will be helpful to college personnel who work with international students. By being sensitized to the adjustment problems students face, professors, faculty and college student workers can be more helpful to international students as they engage in the process of helping them to adjust to life in the United States. The gender difference found in many studies point to a potential situation of double jeopardy for female international students. These students may suffer from particular problems of being female international students. Barnett et al. (1987) pointed out that a considerable amount of research on sex differences in stress and mental health exists, but that very little of this type of research has focused on the interactions between the cultural and gender dimensions of experience. Therefore, special assessment of female international students' needs is necessary in order to direct interventions that could be helpful in their unique circumstances. In addition, the information here will suggest useful areas of focus that can help college student personnel devise additional programs to help troubled international students bridge the gap between the United States and other cultures (Schram & Lauver, 1988). Identification of problematic issues from the international students' point of view will be helpful to college personnel in realizing what is important to the international student. This will also help the college personnel staff to create a climate

that would nurture and enhance international understanding and promote interaction.

Organization of Study

In Chapter 1 I gave some background information of why these women chose to come to the United States, their expectations versus reality. Chapter 2 examines migration, culture shock, and transformation theory. It further describes other studies that have been done on international students. The researcher's use of qualitative interpretive methodology is explained in Chapter 3. Excerpts from the interviews are introduced in Chapter 4 under common emerging themes. The major themes of the study are summarized and implications and recommendations are discussed in Chapter 5.

I approached this project as an opportunity to learn about the lives of female graduate international students from Africa studying at Iowa State University. My own experience as a female graduate international student prompted me to find out the experience of other female graduate international students. This perspective is consistent with the traditional sociology in its validation of self-reflection as a reliable description of social reality. This approach allows for a deeper understanding of the participant's life as it is "more closely tied into the reality that people experience, how they make sense of their worlds, how they cope with their problems, and how they try to maintain some semblance of order in their lives" (Henslin, 1991). This approach made it possible for me to listen, to hear these

women's stories in their own words, and in so doing find enrichment in my own life.

CHAPTER II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter I will discuss international students in the United States, the impact of migration with particular focus on culture shock, and the U curve hypothesis. References are made to studies that have been conducted on problems international students encounter as they study at U.S. colleges and universities. The chapter ends with a discussion of theoretical approaches that have been developed to explore and examine personal transformation, especially that of Mezirow.

According to the Digest of Educational Statistics (1991, p. 421), the percentage of foreign students enrolled in institutions of higher education has increased from 3% in 1981 to 15% in 1991. Thus many foreign students are coming to study at American universities and colleges. Many international students arrive in the United States with high expectations and an optimistic outlook, only to find that the realities of school and differences of culture somewhat dash those dreams before a stable position is reached (Parr, G., Bradley, L., & Bingi, R., 1992). The excitement of getting an opportunity to study abroad seems to overshadow the reality of how one can be traumatized by migrating to another culture and environment.

Human beings respond differently to different situations in which they find themselves. The same can be said about international students in response to the way they react to the new environment and culture they find themselves in as they migrate from their own countries to pursue higher education in foreign lands. How one adapts

to the situation they find themselves in varies from individual to individual. This can result in development and growth or failure and disillusionment depending on how one handles the situation. There are many different processes that international students go through as they try to adapt to their new culture.

Some of the issues related to the inquiry under investigation include migration, the movement from one community or country to another; culture shock, the reactive process stemming from the impact of a new culture upon those who attempt to merge with it as a newcomer; and thirdly, transformation, significant change within an individual that involves a restructuring of the self.

Migration

Migration has an effect upon society as well as the individual undertaking the migration. Human migrations, like all social phenomena, are part of a larger social process. "The causes, characteristics, and consequences vary considerably in time and space" (Stern, in International Migration Today, 1988, p. 30). "Not only does it affect the individual undertaking the migration, the process has consequences socially, politically, and economically." DeVryer (1989) discusses how migration impacts on a person's life. He likens leaving one's country to a mourning process that occurs after one loses their loved one.

In early times, according to Abou-Seada (1970, p. 1), "people migrated in groups where individuals within one group were related to each other by kinship ties." In modern times the situation has

changed, and migration has become typically an individual decision, depending on many factors created by the complex life in our world. The purpose of moving from one place to another is not only for survival, as in the prehistory times, but also looking for a better life socially and economically.

Hutton (1973, p. 97) suggests that movement comes about not only because of absolute poverty, but because aspirations at any economic level may reach a level at which they cannot be satisfied by local opportunities. A major catalyst to the rise in aspirations is education and contact with the outside world. Emphasis on the wide spread of faith in education as the route to socio-economic status was articulated by Castle (1966, p. 18):

This is evident not only in the desires of parents that their children should have a better chance in life, but in the ambitions of young people themselves who see in education the highway to material success.

However, many people minimize the attachment there is to one's country of origin until they become detached from it. According to Roots (1978), human beings become attached in sentiment to places, patterns of conduct and beliefs, which they attribute to past periods and which they associate with places where their ancestors lived.

Sentiments about one's place of origin is never articulated until after one's departure from that place. As long as one remains fixed, there is little expression of attachment to a place of origin (Denford, 1981). Perhaps no awareness of attachment arises until there is an actual or threatened displacement. Generalized

appreciation of attachment to a place of the past location occurs only after the loss of the object of study itself.

According to Bell (1980), migration brings much more than simple population redistribution. Experts on migration say that it also leads to a redistribution of such attributes as social, occupational or religious groups to a restructuring of self. This separation from home brought about by migration encourages a change in social relationships and cultural values. Traditional codes of behavior, customs and disciplines of origin tend to be modified or rejected. It is important to remember that the changes brought about by migration and how one deals with them depend very largely upon the migrants themselves.

Freud stated that "Mourning is regularly the reaction to the loss of a loved person, or to the loss of some abstraction which has taken place such as one's country, liberty or an ideal" (p.243). The loss of one's country resembles the death of a person and, depending on the age at the time of the loss, it may closely parallel a developmental loss, particularly the renouncing of childhood in late adolescence. There is a consensus that the mourning process includes a loss of desire of the lost object, which opens up the possibility of subsequent desire of a new object. Bowlby's model is useful in explaining this mourning process. He distinguishes three stages, the first one being dominated by separation anxiety, grief and efforts to recover the object. In the second stage retrieval has been given up and the focus is no longer on the lost object. This is accompanied by

pain, despair and depression. The third phase heralds reorganization, which may include maintaining values and pursuing goals that have developed in association with the lost object. Successful outcomes in working through the mourning process will depend upon the individual's ability to make sense of the situation so that they can be able to move on.

Culture Shock

An aspect of migration as described by Garza-Guerrero (1989) is culture shock. There are some similarities in how different theorists define culture shock. Guerrero defined culture shock as a sudden change from an expectable environment to a strange and unpredictable one. Befus (1988) defined culture shock as that period of transition and adjustment during which a person who has been relocated experiences some degree of anxiety, confusion and disruption related to living in the new culture. He goes on to say that culture shock causes distress and discomfort, and therefore contributes to human suffering. It also affects intercultural human relationships, which ultimately influence international relations, global trade and politics.

Adler (1975) described culture shock as a set of emotional reactions to the loss of perceptual reinforcements from one's own culture, to new cultural stimuli which have little or no meaning, and to the misunderstanding of new and diverse experiences. It may encompass feelings of helplessness, irritability, and fear of being cheated, contaminated, injured or disregarded.

Foust's (1981) definition of culture shock constructs it as the feeling of frustration and anxiety that arises when familiar cultural cues are suddenly removed and replaced by new seemingly bizarre behavior. The impact of the violent encounter with the new environment, combined with the mourning process set in motion by the loss, causes a threat to the newcomer's identity. The sense of continuity of self and the sense of self-awareness are threatened. The consistency of one's own interpersonal interactions is disrupted. No longer is there the same confirmation of one's identity in the interaction with the environment. In general, culture shock becomes a problem of adaptation and adjustment.

In one sense, culture shock is a form of alienation. In another sense, however, it suggests the attempt to comprehend, survive in and grow through immersion in a second culture. Although culture shock is most often associated with negative consequences, it can be an important aspect of cultural learning, self-development, and personal growth.

Garza-Guerrero (1974) described the process of culture shock as having three phases, with the first phase being a cultural encounter. This is the stage where the sojourner explores cultural differences and similarities and reacts to them. Once the initial shock of the cultural encounter is over, phase two, which is reorganization, occurs. The sojourner then tries to work through the process. The third phase involves new identity. If the crisis of culture shock has been adequately resolved, the end result should be growth of self.

Even though different theorists have defined the term culture shock in different ways, the underlying factor common to all the definitions has to do with some type of disorientation, turmoil, adjustment and adaptation. Given these cultural differences, and misunderstandings of the new diverse experiences, feelings of alienation, anxiety and depression are likely to be experienced by people who travel or migrate to foreign countries, whether permanently or temporarily as part of the transitional experience or adjustment process. The stories these women told were very fitting to the experience of culture shock.

U Curve Adjustment

Some researchers on international students have found support for what has been described as a U curve pattern of adjustment (Lysgaard, 1955), which describes the sojourner's level of adjustment as a function of time in the new culture.

Oei and Notowdjojo's (1990) research described the process of adjustment for international students to seem to follow the hypothesis of the U curve. First there is a period of curiosity, expectation and enjoyment. This is followed by a period of disappointment and disillusionment as the sojourners become aware of the demands of the new culture. Gradually the sojourners learn to cope with the demands and reach a "coming to terms" phase when they start establishing satisfying personal relationships and build up their levels of self-esteem. Lysgaard (1955) also supports the U curve hypothesis and suggests that it is in some way analogous to transitional experiences

where an individual moves from a state of low self and cultural awareness to a state of high self and cultural awareness.

This hypothesis has received some inconsistent support. For example, Church (1982) disagreed with the U curve hypothesis, stating that it was weak, inconclusive, and overgeneralized. He emphasized the fact that not all students begin the sojourn with a "honeymoon phase" or with a period of elation and optimism. He agrees, though, that although depression occurs with some frequency, it is not universal. Even those studies that support the hypothesis show marked differences in the time parameters of the curve. Becker's (1968) study on attitudinal changes among foreign students seems to point out that the U curve hypothesis may be a valid characterization of the western European student in the United States (and very likely of the American student studying in western Europe), but may not apply to the majority of students from underdeveloped countries coming to the developed world. He attributes the differences to culture and environment of the different groups. It seems reasonable to conclude then that all students have problems adjusting to college life but that foreign students experience more uniquely culture-based or stress aggravated by the new cultural experiences.

Becker (1968) did a study on patterns of attitudinal changes among foreign students. His sample consisted of twenty-seven Indians, twenty-five Israelis, and twenty-five European students taken to represent underdeveloped, semideveloped, and highly developed countries. The sample was drawn from a population of foreign students

who were studying at that time at the UCLA campus in the spring of 1964. One of his major objectives was to review a prominent proposition regarding foreign students' attitudes and adjustment patterns. Data were gathered by unstructured interviews which consisted of open-ended questions. The interview lasted from one and a half to two hours. The questions compared favorableness to home country versus the United States (friendliness, treatment of foreigners, religion, etc.). A second set of questions asked about the desirability of transference of any cultural features from the American society to that of the home country and vice versa. The strength of the interviewees' nationalistic feelings was probed by questions on their obligation to their nation and to their compatriot students on campus. The interview ended with a semantic differential test. This was designed to discover the degree of correspondence between data gathered by relatively unstructured and highly structured instruments tapping the same attitudinal area and also to observe the interviewees' reactions to these two different experiences. The data were analyzed by using the Spearman rank correlation.

The results of this research suggested that a U curve-pattern of adjustment was observed for students from highly developed countries, whereas the reverse pattern was true for representatives from underdeveloped countries. It seemed that those students who came from European countries similar to the United States had an easier time adjusting compared to those who were from a less developed country. The general finding was that the visiting students typically started

with very positive attitudes towards the United States; then during the first year they had problems of adjustment and tended to become disillusioned; but beyond a certain time they gained a deeper and more sophisticated insight and became increasingly favorable toward the host country. This was a finding replicated in many studies. Though many researchers regard it as "highly general," its application to foreign student programs could be of great practical importance for the design of such programs.

The Reverse U Curve Adjustment

The reverse U curve pattern which Becker suggests is prominent in students from underdeveloped countries is characterized by a relatively hostile attitude towards the host country during the initial and final stages of the sojourn. The middle phase is marked by relative detachment from the home country, less stereotype and a more favorable view of the United States. However, the less cautious proponents of the U curve proposition which I tend to agree with claim that the visiting student, regardless of his nationality background, typically starts with a highly enthusiastic reaction toward the United States.

The U curve pattern and its reversal cannot be considered the norm for all students from both developed and underdeveloped countries as individual differences play a significant role in how one adjusts and adapts to a new culture. Church suggests that longitudinal studies of individuals over time might be required to specify the "shape" of an individual's curve of adjustment.

Apart from the U curve hypothesis other authors have documented different processes of how international students adapt to their new culture and environment. Bochner (1972) observed foreign student adjustment as multiple in nature. He concluded that foreign students need to adjust in four different areas: a) as a foreigner with special cultural learning problems, b) as a student adjusting to the stress common to all beginning students, c) as a maturing, developing person concerned about purposes, meanings and goals, and d) as a national representative sensitive about his or her ethnic background and national status. Bochner suggests that if these social learning principles are practiced, the adjustment process might not be that stressful.

Other Studies on International Students

In a different study on adaptation of African students, Pruitt (1978) concluded that the major problems were in the area of climate, communication with Americans, discrimination, homesickness, depression and tiredness. The major bases of the research were to predict how well sub-Saharan African students adapted to American culture and also to identify the major problems faced by these students so as to provide guidance for people who are responsible for them.

Two hundred and ninety-six questionnaires were completed by sub-Saharan African students on nine American campuses that differed in size, geographical region, and racial composition. The questionnaire consisted mainly of multiple-choice questions with only four open-ended questions. In this study adjustment was determined by the

degree of happiness and the absence of problems in 11 different areas. These were social and environmental problems, psychological and physical problems, leisure time companionship, usefulness of the office of Foreign Student Affairs, frequency of visits to the office of Foreign Student Affairs, political views, religious activities, changes in attitude toward religion attributed to the American experience, description of American values and ways of life, relationship between adjustment at first and assimilation and the relationship between adjustment now and assimilation.

The major problems both at first and later were depression, tiredness, homesickness, irritability and racial discrimination. There were also initial problems such as climate, communication with Americans, loneliness and food, but these improved markedly over time. Several questions examined the student's closeness to his own society and to American society. Other questions dealt with attitudes and religious observance. The study was analyzed by examining the correlations among selected variables. Two indices to the overall adjustment problem were used: by characterization of the situation at first and another by characterization of the situation later.

All correlations reported in the study were significant at the 0.1 level. Some of the variables had high correlations whereas some were very low. For example, acceptance of American values and ways of life had a composite correlation of .43, whereas Ethiopian students as a group had a correlation of -.22, reflecting a negative attitude toward American education. The author suggests a few measures which

can be taken to integrate African students into American society. This could be done by a) encouraging foreign students to have knowledge of the United States especially in the areas of people, customs, and social institutions before arrival; b) encouraging students to live with an American roommate and/or visit American families; and c) encouraging students to maintain religious activities, and churches to take a stronger interest in foreign students. The study also shows alienation from the American culture on the part of students who experience discrimination.

Pruitt's study tapped into various problems foreign students encounter but did not go further as to explaining how these students cope with the problems they experience.

Parr, Bradley and Bingi (1992) did a study on concerns and feelings of international students at Texas Technology University. This research study addressed three basic questions. The first asked what are the concerns of international students and how might their concerns be best classified. This was addressed by factor analysis of a questionnaire developed for the study. The second question was concerned with whether students' concerns were related to their feelings. The hypothesis for the second question was that there would be a positive and significant correlation between strength of concern and frequency of negative feelings. The third question addressed whether the magnitude of students' concerns and feelings varied significantly across demographic differences such as sex and race. The participants completed a questionnaire having 11 items on

demographic characteristics, 40 items on concerns, and 15 items on feelings. The items on concerns revealed concerns about having adequate contact with their extended family and their extended family's welfare during their absence. Their greatest concerns in terms of adapting to cultural differences were learning how to interpret and respond to aspects of the American character such as assertiveness, competitiveness, understanding how Americans think and adapting to American norms without compromising their own cultural norms. They reported little fear of being corrupted by drugs. Having adequate financial aid and finding work-study opportunities were two greatest financial concerns. Their school concerns were finding an adviser who would devote time to them and understanding class lectures. Other items receiving a rating of little concern were finding familiar groceries and foods and adjusting to American cars and traffic, acquiring and carrying required identification cards, learning how to use American gadgets and finding a place of worship.

The feelings items on the questionnaire provided a self-reported profile of how students felt while attending school in the United States. The findings in this study suggest that international students' concerns were moderate in intensity, and their self-portrait depicted feelings that were more positive than negative. These findings are consistent with Leong, Mallinckrodt, and Krolj's (1990) conclusion that international students may be rather stalwart in coping with stressful life events and Wehrly's (1988) observations that international students have the ability to persevere, sometimes

despite what may seem like insurmountable odds. These findings were also in compliance with the U curve hypothesis.

Other studies that have been conducted on international students include:

- (a) Stoyneff's (1990) study on the English language proficiency and study strategies as determinants of academic success for international students in U.S. universities. The possible determinants used in the study included language proficiency (measured by the Test of English as a Foreign Language-TOEFL), study strategies (measured by the Learning and Study Strategies Inventory-LASSI), and selected personal characteristics. These factors were correlated with grade point average (GPA) and other measures such as earned credits, number of incompletes, withdrawals and courses designated "pass/no pass." The major implication of the findings was that many international students, even those with "satisfactory" TOEFL scores can benefit from study skills instruction that focuses on methods for coping with language demands of their classes, especially processing lectures, reading assignments, and test taking. The study also suggests that a TOEFL score above a criterion cut-off does not necessarily mean that an international student is ready to undertake university course work.
- (b) Antanaitis's (1990) study at George Washington University on cultural variances as they affect classroom performance examined difficulties foreign graduate students face in the field of

education. She examined difficulties foreign graduate students face, specifically attending lectures, taking notes, and participating in class, and also examined students' perceptions of the interest and sensitivity shown to them by American professors and students. The participants were interviewed using a questionnaire formulated by the researcher. The results of this study indicated that more than half of the students interviewed were experiencing frequent difficulties in all areas the study considered.

- (c) A study on the adaptation of Afrikan students to Iowa State University was conducted by Marshal-Bradley (1992). The study sought to compare the adaptation of students from different countries on the continent of Afrika to Iowa State University regarding housing communication with Americans, discrimination, financial matters, food, immigration, loneliness, academic progress and feelings of homesickness. The findings of this study indicated that Afrikan students' educational experiences did not promote rapport and involvement with Americans. The findings also indicated that the adaptation of the Afrikan students is based, to a great extent, on the background, age, and personality of the individual student.
- (d) In a study entitled Students, wives and mothers: Mature women overseas students, Durojaiye and Donald (1984) looked at the life-patterns, motivation and family support for mature women overseas students. This study was conducted at the University of

Cardiff, England. The information obtained from this study was going to be utilized by institutions of higher education in Britain to understand the circumstances of their students so that they could offer relevant support services to these women. Sixty-three women from developing countries answered a questionnaire and participated in small group interviews.

The results of the study suggested the importance for people involved in the education of mature women students from overseas to be aware of the conditions under which these students come to pursue their studies. The study also suggested that institutions where such women are enrolled should have recognition of their considerable qualities as dedicated professionals, and that this should be accompanied by appreciation of the considerable strains placed upon them by the balancing act of being students, wives, and mothers. The sponsoring agents in the home countries, as well as the educational institutions, should support them financially, and they should be given academic and professional guidance as well as pastoral care.

This study fits very well with some of the discussion I got from my study. The need to be respected by professors, to be tolerated and to be guided and given the same opportunity to excel like other graduate students.

The subject matters of previous studies were mostly centered around academic performance, adjustment to the U.S. environment and problems thereof. However, the study by Durojaiye and Donald (1984)

involves a broader context of student. Besides identifying what the problems are, not much research has been done on how international students go about solving these problems.

These problems and frustrations encountered in the culture shock process are important to an understanding that change and movement experiences can be a source of higher levels of personality development. Implicit in the conflict and tension posed by the transitional experiences lies the potential for authentic growth and development, "the transcendence from environment to self support" (Perls, 1969).

Transformative Theory

Many psychologists have introduced different developmental theories to describe the process of personal growth and development. Recently Mezirow has suggested transformative theory as an alternative framework for explaining the personal growth in adulthood. He described sudden changes such as alienation, feelings of frustration and anxiety rooted in culture shock as precursors of transformation. Mezirow's (1981) research on perspective transformation defined it as

the emancipatory process of becoming critically aware of how and why the structure of psycho-cultural assumptions has come to constrain the way we see ourselves and our relationships, reconstituting this structure to permit a more inclusive and discriminating integration of experience and acting upon these new understandings (p. 6).

He goes on to say that perspective transformation occurs in response to externally imposed disorienting dilemmas like divorce, death of a loved one, change in job status, retirement and other. The

disorienting dilemma may be evoked by an eye-opening discussion, book, poem or painting, or by one's efforts to understand a different culture that challenges one's presuppositions.

Anomalies and dilemmas of which old ways of knowing cannot make sense become catalysts or "trigger events" that precipitate critical reflection and transformations. According to transformative theory, "it is not so much what happens to people but how they interpret and explain what happens to them that determines their actions, hopes, contentment, well-being, and performance" (Jack Mezirow, 1991, p. xiii). Clark, M. C. and Wilson, A. I. (1990) alluded to Mezirow's goal on transformational learning as to derive meaning from experience in order to provide grounds for action. They quote Mezirow's definition of learning as "the process of construing and appropriating a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of one's experience as a guide to action (1990a, p. 1).

Mezirow's 1975 national study of women who were returning to college to participate in reentry programs suggested that the process of personal transformation involves ten phases. These are:

- 1) a disorienting dilemma;
- 2) self examination with feelings of guilt or shame;
- 3) a critical assessment of epistemic sociocultural or psychic assumptions;
- 4) recognition that one's discontent and the process of transformation are shared and that others have negotiated a similar change;
- 5) exploration of options for new roles, relationships and actions;
- 6) planning a course of action;
- 7) acquisition of knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans;
- 8) provisional trying of new roles;

- 9) building of competence and self confidence in new roles and relationships; and
- 10) reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's new perspective (Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning, pp. 168-9).

These phases were supported in a separate study by Joyce Morgan (1987). She studied thirty displaced homemakers who had become separated, divorced or had suffered the death of a spouse. These women were involved in a college program designed for them. Morgan's stages of transition for this group were shock and devastation, pain and rejection, immobilization and depression, gaining confidence, exploring options, decision making and establishment of independence. For some women in the study major belief shifts had occurred such as defining their own identity, taking responsibility for themselves, recognizing that there were options for ways of thinking and acting, and many more different belief shifts were observed.

In a related study done on intercultural competency: a transformative learning process, Taylor (1993) came up with a model (Figure 1) that explains the learning process of becoming interculturally competent. The model provides a longitudinal perspective identifying a contiguous series of components in the process of becoming competent. Taylor argues that both perspective and intercultural transformation offer similar models of change. Each model offers a hierarchical stage of the transformation process whereby people evolve from lower to higher levels of competence. Intercultural transformation begins with a pattern of alienation and initial contact, followed by a trial and error period of testing new

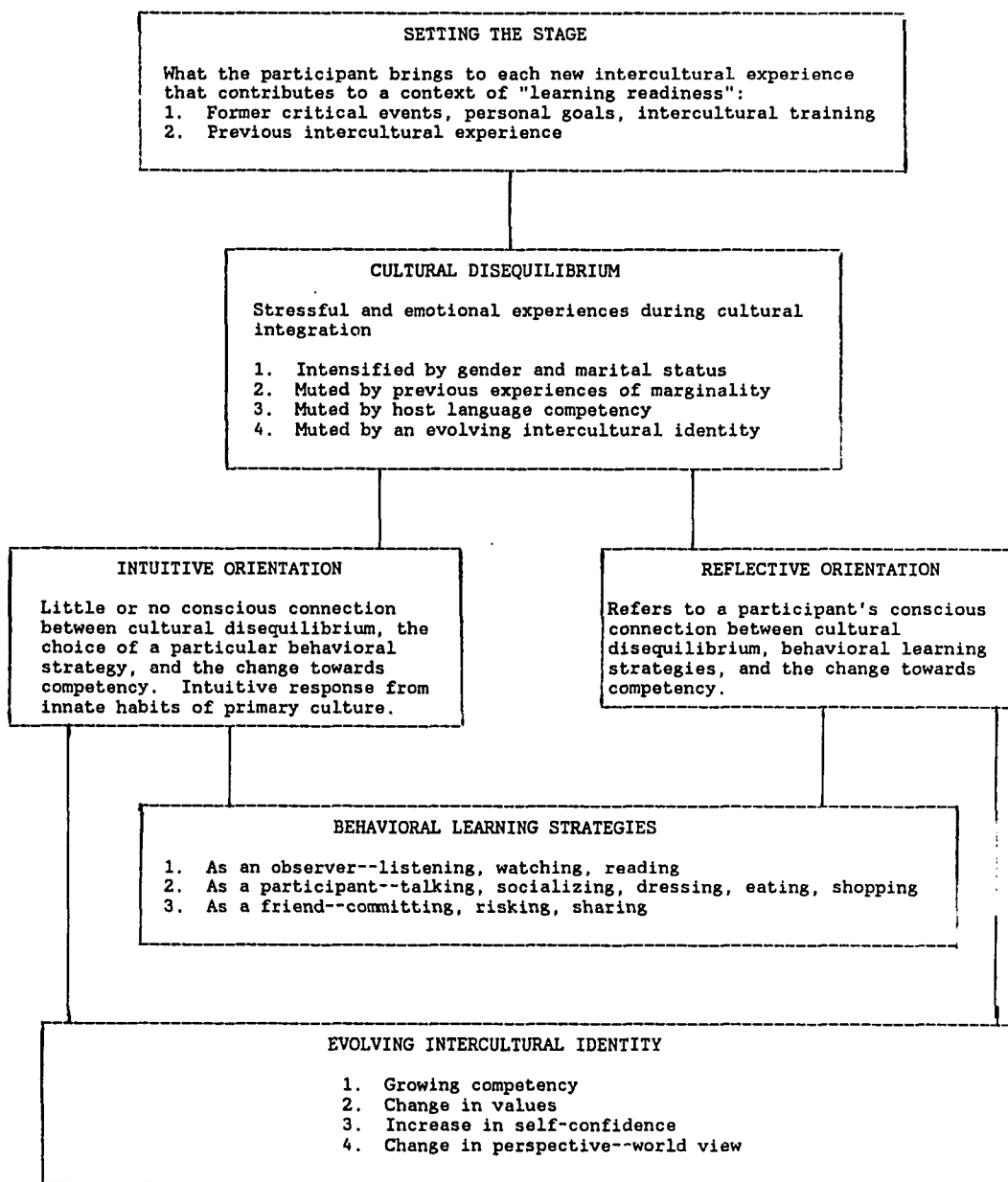


Figure 1. The learning process of intercultural competency

habits and assumptions and concluding with a stage of duality and interdependence within a new culture. Taylor views these stages as analogous to Mezirow's ten phases of personal transformation.

Karpiak's (1981) qualitative study on transformative change suggests that the most powerful means to effect transformative change is through shocking and sudden critical event(s), such events as life threatening illness or the death of a loved one. These events can be externally or internally generated. In addition, she suggests that the study of transformative change promotes a new look at change and a fresh look at crisis events. Crisis events are those troublesome chaotic moments that disturb prevailing patterns of behavior. She suggests that it is not the stable and comfortable times that yield transformative change, rather, the shocks and sudden innovations that become the triggers for developmental change and evolution. Hence, proponents of transformative change suggest that when it occurs it can lead to a new level of consciousness which is expressed in work, love and self.

Her study of twenty social workers, eleven women and nine men who had indicated that they were going through a midlife transition is a good example of transformation. She used open-ended interviews and "clustering" as a way of data collection. The interviews were tape recorded and transcribed. Her study revealed that there was no single way in which midlife change occurs. The findings also suggest that the most powerful means to effect transformative change is the shocking and sudden critical events that occur in a person's life. In

this study transformation came about by the experience of critical events in these women's lives.

Boyd and Myers (1988) also found that the central aim of perspective transformation is liberation of the individual from personal unconscious content and reifications of cultural norms and patterns that block the individual's self actualization. The end result is to facilitate the ego's empowerment to take control over those conditions and forces which will stand in the way of moving toward self-actualization. Most of these women took control of the difficult experiences that they had encountered and used the situation as an incentive to achieve their goals.

Roger Gould's (1990) article on "Fostering Critical Reflection in Adulthood" discusses how adults learn to adapt to new circumstances as they go through life's transitions. At the same time when the demands of life's situation evolve then one has to revise the meaning perspective of the past in order to change behavior patterns and attitudes so as to adapt. These patterns are embedded in the person's being and create an illusion of safety. Even though this is so, new priorities in the life cycle emerge which require new attitudes and new behavior. Sometimes people cannot respond to the fact of current reality with appropriate adaptation because of internal conflict (inhibitions, defenses, character patterns). The adaptational demand challenges them to free that response from underlying conflicts in order to be flexible enough to respond appropriately and effectively to the perceived present reality. The end result is when a person

arrives at a clearer and grounded understanding of current reality and is able to act upon it. These women did not let the frustrations that they had encountered deter them from achieving their goals. They responded effectively to their different situations by acting upon it, and, in the end, they achieved their goals.

Jung's (1969) extensive work on transformative theory alluded to the results of personal transformation as a structural reorganization of self that occurs as the individual thinks, feels, reflects and acts upon all aspects of self and environment.

Transformative learning makes it possible for us to move from one level, stage or phase of development to another, become emancipated from our constraining habits of expectation and move to a perspective that permits interpretations which are more inclusive, differentiating, permeable and integrative of experience. The move to a transformed perspective enables us to see how dependency producing and oppressive institutionalized social practices, norms and cultural codes must be changed through social action.

Even though the preceding studies support Mezirow's transformative theory, several researchers reject important aspects of the theory. Critics of Mezirow's transformative theory agree that it overemphasizes the individual and neglects the social contextual needs embodied in the situation. Clark and Wilson (1991) came to the conclusion that Mezirow's efforts to attain his goal of deriving meaning from experience is impeded by the separation of experience from the context which both shapes it and provides its interpretive

frame. Their argument is that all human meaning is context-dependent and that Mezirow fails to maintain the essential link between meaning of experience and the context in which it arises and by which it is interpreted. They further comment on Mezirow's original study of women's reentry programs, that he did not pursue these contextual areas and that the women's experiences were studied as if they stood apart from their historical and sociocultural context, thereby limiting understanding of the full meaning of those experiences. While the two critics agree that perspective transformation occurs prominently in adult development, they reject the claim that it constitutes a generic process.

Taylor also questions Mezirow's (1991) assumptions in that he suggests that what the participants bring influences the transformation process such that context places a significant role in the learning experience, and Mezirow's theory falls short of that.

Collard and Law (1989) wrote on Limits of Perspective Transformation, in which they also came to the conclusion that Mezirow's failure to address adequately questions of context, ideology and the radical needs embodied in popular struggles denies perspective transformation the power of an emancipatory theory.

These critics suggest that Mezirow's theory needs to be more concerned with exploring and understanding the relation between context and meaning rather than seeking to minimize the effects of context on meaning.

Although this study is based on accepting Mezirow's transformative theory as a model, my interviews have attempted to compensate for these criticisms by including the sociocultural contexts in that these women talked about in their educational, social and religious experiences during their sojourn as they tried to adjust and adapt to their new culture and environment. Most of their problems arose from sociocultural differences which led me to believe that their problems were embedded in cultural as well as personal responses. This research design enabled me to explore culture by evaluating Mezirow's transformative theory.

Mezirow's theory can be more powerful if we add to it the social contextual aspect which would ground it in the context in which it occurs.

These theoretical perspectives, rooted in a culturally sensitive transformative theory, form the basis for this proposed study of the personal transformative process as experienced by female international students studying at Iowa State University. In-depth interviews provided the information to study transformations of these female students.

Conclusion

The review of literature indicated recurring themes from different authors on how transformation occurs in a person's life. Research indicates that migration has a profound effect on a person's life. Research also indicates that international students arrive in the United States with high expectations and an optimistic outlook.

When the demands of school and differences in culture and environment arise, a lot of students become disoriented. This is when people long for their own culture or familiar cues they have become accustomed to all their lives.

The migration process, together with culture shock and the college experience, can be viewed as precursors to transformation. It has been established that these inconsistencies cause inner turmoil which in turn causes transformation. Karpiak's research discusses how individuals in her study felt as if they were "pushed against the wall," and their illusions were put before them, this is when new insights and new behaviors followed. By giving attention to these inner rumblings, one makes choices and changes follow. It is hoped that the individual emerges with a different view of self and of their world.

Some of the dilemmas international students face include money problems, social problems, educational problems, cultural differences, discrimination and many others. This research suggests that as these anomalies occur one has to step back and reflect on who they are and what it is that they want to accomplish, thereby making changes in order for them to accomplish their goals.

The review of literature is suggesting that there are problems that international students face as they study at American colleges and universities. These problems are multiple in nature. Many of the studies that have been done emphasize the existence of academic, environmental and adjustment problems. In addition to recognizing the

existence of these problems, this study will attempt to reveal how female graduate international students studying at Iowa State respond to these problems as they try to accomplish their goals. The main goal of transformative theory is to explain how people move from one meaning perspective to another. Thus, Mezirow's transformative theory as enhanced by a developed consideration of cultural context will be used as the theoretical basis for this study.

CHAPTER III. RESEARCH DESIGN

A variety of research methods are used as a means for better understanding complex social phenomena. It is important that the researcher selects the most appropriate method for the task at hand. In this study, the researcher's interest is to investigate personal experiences of female international students studying at Iowa State University. A qualitative researcher's goal is to understand human behavior and experience better. Qualitative researchers seek to grasp the process by which people construct meaning and to describe those meanings. In order to understand these female students' histories, told in their own words, a holistic approach was adapted.

Rationale for Using Qualitative Research

Qualitative inquirers seek to interpret human actions, events, and customs. By so doing, they construct a portrayal of what is being studied. The ultimate goal is to portray a complex pattern of the subject of study in sufficient depth and detail so that one who has not experienced it can understand it. Until recently, the qualitative approach had been rejected by many educational researchers as unscientific, mainly because of its lack of research controls. Proponents of positivism assume the existence of an objective reality that can only be found through a deductive approach. They establish a priori assumptions about relationships. Positivism requires the use of standardized measures so that varying perspectives and experiences of people can fit into a limited number of predetermined response

categories to which numbers are assigned (Patton, 1990). By contrast, nonpositivistic methods typically produce a wealth of detailed information about a much smaller number of people and cases. This wealth of information emerges from the participants' past experiences and events as they recall them. This increases understanding of the cases and situations studied but reduces generalizability. Other opponents of qualitative research question the legitimacy of a small sample-size. Experts in qualitative research say that the size of the sample should depend on what you want to find, how you want to find it, how the findings will be used and what resources you have for the study. In-depth information from a small number of people can be very valuable, especially if the participants are information-rich. Patton (1981) stated that the sample of qualitative research must be judged on context and not the sample size. Piaget's major breakthrough study of understanding how children think was established by observing his own two children.

The meaningfulness and validity generated from qualitative inquiry focuses more on information-richness than with sample size. Even though this has been the rule, some changes are taking place and more people are using qualitative research methods. This approach assures a holistic outlook in the research in order to gain a comprehensive and complete picture of the group or individual being studied in contrast to quantitative research. The main rationale for using life histories is that no nonhuman instrument is sufficiently flexible to adapt to the complex situation as it evolves, and to

identify and take into account biases that result from the interactions and value differences between the researcher and the subjects. As Patton (1990) states, qualitative studies provide depth, detail and individual meaning.

In this study, qualitative methods permitted the researcher to study transformative theory in depth and detail as it occurs in female graduate students from developing countries. The study required a wealth of information about the participants' experiences, feelings, opinions and knowledge. These would not have come through had conventional empirical paradigms been used. The importance of this qualitative interpretive method is that data can be obtained in areas of social life that cannot be easily tapped by quantitative data collecting techniques (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Population

Because the researcher was interested in personal experiences of female graduate international students, purposive sampling was used. In order to limit the variations in the backgrounds of these students, the researcher decided to focus on one region--Africa. Even though these students come from different countries of the continent, most of the countries have similar histories: that of being colonized by either the British or the French and having the same type of educational system. The researcher got a list of all the African international students studying at Iowa State from the Iowa State University International Office. A list of nineteen female graduate international students was extrapolated from that pool. This was done

by going through the international office's records where students are classified by their country of origin, the department they are in, their classification, and the admission date. These women had been studying at Iowa State University for more than one year.

Sample Size

According to Patton (1990), the logic of purposeful sampling is quite different from the logic of probability sampling. In most cases researchers tend to judge the credibility of small purposeful samples on the basis of the logic and purpose recommended for probability sampling. Therefore, purposeful sampling should be judged on the purpose and rationale of each study. The sample must be judged in context. The sample size for this study was nineteen. Initially, it had been proposed that twenty female graduate international students be interviewed. However, only nineteen female graduate international students from Africa were attending Iowa State at the time this study was conducted. Of the nineteen potential participants only one refused to be interviewed. Regionally three of the participants were from different subSaharan countries, four were from East Africa, three were from different Northeast African countries, and eight were from three West African countries. Four of the women interviewed belonged to the Islamic religion and the rest of the women were Christians.

Permission was obtained from the Human Subjects Committee at Iowa State University to interview these individuals. Each individual was contacted by letter requesting her participation and suggestions for a suitable time for the interview. A follow-up telephone conversation

was made to all participants to set the time and place for the interview.

Interview Schedule

The first interview was conducted in the Fall of 1992 and the last one was completed in Spring of 1993. Interviews took place in the participants' homes, my home, and at the Iowa State Library. Each interview lasted between one and a half and two hours. The researcher began by asking participants to discuss some objective set of experiences connected to life course changes. These life course changes included childhood, adolescence, early adulthood and adulthood. Along with the life course changes are life course experiences such as education, marriage, death and employment. The participants were encouraged to discuss these wherever it was applicable. Information was gathered through the use of in-depth interviews which involved subjects responding to open-ended questions recounting a set of life experiences in story form. Each participant was interviewed once. This open-ended inductive research process allows for insights, concepts and understandings to arise from the data and are "systematically worked out in relation to the data during the course of research" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The researcher prompted subjects to expand on various sections of their stories in order to acquire more information about the experience. The interviews were later transcribed. The researcher then subjected these narratives to careful reviews and interpretations. The constant comparative method was used to analyze the data. This is an inductive

strategy that consists of categorically coding units of information while simultaneously comparing all incidents applicable to each category (Goetz and LeCompte, 1984). While coding each incident for a category, the researcher compares it with previous incidents in the same category. The process is a continuous refinement of categories. Categorizing brings together those units of information that relate to the same content. The categories are then integrated to delineate themes or common ideas.

The main purpose of the interviews was to gather in-depth information on the experiences of these female graduate international students studying at Iowa State University. The primary research instrument, an interview schedule, served as a guideline for open-ended interviews. The main purpose was to develop questions that would lead to a better understanding of transformation perspective as it manifests itself in these female graduate international women. The interview schedule (see Appendix) had five parts to it: personal history as a young girl growing up, decision to come to the United States, life as a student at Iowa State University, troublesome times/events, and resolving issues.

All interviews were tape recorded except one. One individual requested that I not audio-tape the majority of the interview because this was a very delicate issue to her and I honored that. This particular individual had been in trouble with the law. My conversation with her seemed to show that she did not trust anybody. She had told me that she did not trust her probation officer. She

felt that he told her story to everybody. With her permission I took notes on the rest of the interview. Although a standard interview outline was utilized, the questions served as an opener to extended accounts of life histories which the interviewees shaped themselves. However, time and again I had to prompt the participants to expand more on various issues of their stories I thought were critical to the study.

After introductions, reading and signing of the consent form, the respondents were assured that their responses would be confidential. They were also assured that pseudonyms would be used to protect their identities. My status as a female graduate international student from Africa proved to be advantageous in establishing trust and rapport during the interview process. As a female graduate international student I was less intimidating. My status eased the way for honest discussions about professors and the American culture in general without fear of repercussions. I also observed that these women were anxious to share their stories. They had all experienced many difficulties and have never had an opportunity to share them with someone else. In a lot of cases, longer discussions went on after the initial interview had ended. With the interviewees' permission, I took notes on these discussions as well. Apart from one woman who refused to be interviewed because she was too busy with her young children and did not have time, most of the women appeared pleased to be interviewed.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the population for this study consisted of eighteen female graduate international students from nine different African countries. The majority of them were Christians, and three of them were Moslems. All of them had come to pursue higher education and/or join their spouses. They had all been at Iowa State University for over a year at the time of the interview. The in-depth interviews allowed these women to tell their experiences in their own words. By use of constant comparison method of their different experiences during their sojourn, some common themes were generated.

CHAPTER IV. DATA ANALYSIS

One major problem with analysis of qualitative research is the lack of agreement upon shared ground rules for drawing conclusions and verifying data. There are no formulas for determining significance, no ways of perfectly replicating this type of research. There are no absolute rules except to fairly represent the data and communicate what the data reveals given the purpose of the study (Patton, 1990). Because qualitative research is unique, the analytical approach used is unique to the study. Patton stated that "The human factor is the great strength and the fundamental weakness of qualitative inquiry and analysis" (p. 372). This means that qualitative inquiry depends at every stage on the skills, insights, and capabilities of the researcher.

The 18 women interviewed for this study represented nine different countries of the African continent. Their ages ranged from 25 to 46. Of the 18 women interviewed, five were single, and four had been divorced since they moved to the United States. The remaining nine were married but only four of them had their husbands living with them here. The participants' parents' backgrounds ranged from professionals, government officials, businessmen, market women, peasant farmers to homemakers.

The participants' names have been changed to protect their identities. The Iowa State University Human Subjects Review Committee evaluated this project and concluded that the rights and welfare of

the human subjects were protected, that confidentiality of data was assured, and that informed consent was obtained.

For the purposes of data analysis the researcher categorized the data into six different themes as they emerged from the transcriptions. These themes covered the areas of

- decision making,
- negotiating two cultures,
- building support network,
- community experiences,
- college experience,
 - racism,
 - ethnocentrism,
 - communication,
 - testing issues, and
- resolving issues/coping.

Each of the above themes is discussed in this chapter.

Decision Making

As discussed earlier, students from developing countries reach levels where their quest and desires for higher education cannot be satisfied by what is available locally. Opportunities for improvement and advancement are very limited, thus travelling overseas offers better opportunities which would not be otherwise attained.

Seven women in this study came to the states to join their spouses who were already students here. The other eleven came to pursue higher education on their own. Those who came to join their

husbands took advantage of the opportunity and pursued higher education.

The following are descriptions of the circumstances that led these women to come to America.

Jackie is a 27 year old mother of two pursuing a Ph.D. She remembers not being able to finish her elementary school because of a civil war in her country. Jackie is the oldest child in a family of four. Her parents always told her about the benefits of a good education.

I never even had a choice like some other children. Some of them never even got to finish elementary school. That wasn't a choice for me. I always knew that I had to finish elementary school and then I will have to go to college.

Jackie went and lived with an uncle in the big city so she could get a high school education. After she had finished her high school, she did not get admitted at the local university because getting admitted depended on how much money you were willing to part with rather than your qualifications.

Back home it is very competitive to get into the university. My family is not rich enough to buy my way into the university because that is what it comes down to when you are ready to go to the university. If your parents are not rich enough to bribe those who make the decisions they might overlook you even though you are qualified. They might overlook you and accept another person that might be even less qualified than you because their parent goes and bribes whoever wanted a bribery.

There were no jobs to talk of at that time in her country. So Jackie found herself staying at home. She ended up at a teacher training college at her parents' insistence.

My parents wanted me to go to a training college. I didn't like it you know so instead of staying home, I said o.k. let me go there and just while away my time and wait for something else to come up.

Jackie got married in 1982. Her husband came to the states to study. After about a year Jackie joined her husband and started working on her undergraduate degree. They went to two other universities before they came to Iowa State. Jackie successfully completed her written and oral preliminaries and is in the process of writing her research proposal.

So, basically, I came here because my husband was here, and he asked me to come.

Vickie was the younger of the two children in her family. She always felt as though she was the oldest child because she assumed a lot of responsibility at an early age.

In terms of our education there really was no distinction between what he as a boy could do or what I as a girl could do. In fact to the contrary I think I was given more responsibility at home being the oldest girl. I think my brother was very lazy and he would rather not have the responsibility and I was more mature maybe at those tender ages.

When Vickie was growing up in the capitol city, she assumed that education was available to all, girls and boys. It was not until she was doing practical teaching that she experienced how people in rural areas viewed education for girls.

In a sense many of them saw it as an investment if their daughter was able to go through middle school. Then when they got married whoever the suitor would pay more for them. So that is when I began to realize that it wasn't the same, what I had gone through. The doors that had been open to me were not the same. As families, as individual families,

they do control who in the family can go on. In my family if anything I got more encouragement to go on than my brother.

Vickie described her coming to the states as a combination of things.

My main reason for coming to the United States was twofold. First, my primary reason was to come and join my husband. My husband had been here for two years pursuing a Ph.D., and so it followed that I would also try to come and join him. In the process I thought, while I am here I might as well further my education. Once I got here, I started applying to go to school at Iowa State. I came without a scholarship, needless to say.

Vickie came to the states with one of her sons and left the other son in the care of her brother and sister-in-law. Unfortunately Vickie's marriage did not last when she got here. She was in an abusive marriage and had to get a divorce. This was a very tough decision for her because she solely depended on her husband. She has successfully completed a doctorate degree. At age 40 Vickie has secured a good job with a state social service agency. She has also managed to bring her other son who had remained at home to the states.

Shingai grew up amid strict restrictions of what she could or could not do because of her family's religious beliefs.

My mom had a lot of pressure on her to have me stay home or go to the Islamic schools. They devoutly believe that Moslem girls don't need to go to the school for the western education. We had our own Arabic schools. But my mom never paid attention, so I used to go to both. I used to go to the Arabic school and the American school.

Shingai is a thirty-five year old divorced mother of three. She got divorced after she had come to join her husband here in the

states. She is going to school, working and raising her three children by herself. After she had finished her elementary education she went to a boarding school which was one hundred and eighty miles from her home. "This was very contrary to our village," she explained.

After my secondary education I went to a bigger city and I went to do a two year program in the university. By then I really had some kind of-- some higher ambition for myself educationally, but I didn't I mean, I didn't have the mind to come to the United States. I intended to do it all in my country. But I got money and my husband was here studying and that is how I got here.

Shingai told me that it was not easy for her to leave her country because she had a good job and was supporting her family.

I had a job back in my country which comparative to our standards was a very good job. And I had a good income and I kind of, I was responsible for my family, too. Not all of it, but I thought I should help my family and I was doing so, I mean, to give up all and come here was problem you know.

Shingai could not go to school like she had hoped to. She did not have money to put herself through school. After a few years she started to have kids.

Basically in my country university education is free if you can make it. It is open to anybody who can get into it if you can. But when I got here I found out that it wasn't that way. You really need money to go to school and I couldn't go because of that problem. Of course after a number of years, I started having kids, and that made the problem worse. My husband wasn't very interested. He wasn't ready to help, so.

Despite her misfortune, Shingai is now a registered nurse with the state of Iowa and is halfway through with a master's program at Iowa State University.

Choni grew up in an upper middle-class family. Her childhood was very secluded and most of her early education was done in private schools.

Well, as a young girl I grew up in a family that there were three girls and one boy, so I had no problem. My parents are professionals so they had no problem with us going to school. I was a very good student, so I had no problems with my parents about that.

Choni has a very good, stable family. She wanted to get a higher education and to better herself. For her, coming to America was a choice she made. She explains how it all happened:

Well, I first wanted to come here to do my undergrad. But my father died, and my mother didn't want me to go to the U.S. She wanted me to go to school in England. So, I didn't want to go to school in England because I really don't like the English culture, but then holidays and stuff I didn't like to live there, so we made a compromise. I would do my undergrad in Nigeria, and then after I finish and want to go to grad school, I can come over here. I worked for two years after my undergrad. I was bored working, so I decided to go back to grad school. I was trying to find a few more challenges, a few more interesting things.

My family was very supportive of me coming here. They told me that if things didn't work out I could always go back.

Choni had visited England several times on vacation with her parents. So coming to the states was not a totally new experience for her. She was surprised, though, by how small Ames was in comparison to the big city of Lagos where she grew up. The Iowa winters almost

made her pack her bags. Choni is studying engineering, and she thinks because she is the only black female she gets treated well.

Ebba grew up in a society where women were not expected to obtain an education beyond tenth grade. For her, going to school was hard because her father could not afford it. She says:

I grew up in the city. We didn't have any money at all. One year we had to stop going to school because we didn't have any money. My father was discouraged to send us to school because we were all girls. He did not pay any attention to it.

Some of Ebba's uncles helped by buying books for school. Ebba's marriage did not last, and she was left with a son to take care of after she got divorced.

I managed to get a diploma after high school. I got a job and started working to support my son. I knew I had to get a higher education for myself. So I started to go to night school and worked during the day.

Ebba's decision to come and study was due to lack of opportunity for higher education and also for the fact that she was a single mother who was trying to raise her son with very little income. Here she describes her situation:

I didn't quite decide to come to the United States as such. I was mainly you know, my marriage didn't last long and so I had a child and was a single mother. Working was quite difficult to make ends meet, and at that point I realized it was important for me as a woman to get my education to be self sufficient. And also coming from South Africa with their apartheid situation. As a black person, despite how much education you have, especially as a woman, you know black women in South Africa we are the lowest paid. The maids are paid much better than us. I had worked for a white woman who didn't have as much education as I did. At my other job, one white girl who had only stage six was in charge

of me. She was earning much more money. That inspired me also to seek for more education. Then I tried to study there at the University of South Africa; it was a very bad thing. That was very hard because we didn't have any, basically we just received tutors. You study it by yourself and then take the exam, nobody to direct you at all. It was quite difficult. I did manage to get a few courses. But also, South Africa again is a segregated country. You travel for an hour to go to Soweto and then there was segregation where we had the people where we had the people who were supposed to help us with our studies. That was in the center of town. So that was at 5:00; after work you go directly and then you meet around 6:00, maybe until nine. Then travel all the way back to Soweto. It wasn't safe; it was the city, and you couldn't just travel at night like that.

Ebba was very frustrated by what she could and could not do in her country where apartheid is practiced. She applied for a scholarship she had seen through an advertisement and was able to secure it. Ebba left her son with her sister and came to the states to study. She was able to go back after her master's program and brought her son with her.

Ebba's program of study has not been easy, but she has persevered and is currently writing her dissertation.

The aspiration to further their education was noted in most of these women's stories. Once they got the means to come the decision was very easy to make because these women had high ambitions for themselves. Even though it was tough for these women to leave their loved ones, they were determined to better themselves, and this to them was a great opportunity of pursuing their dreams.

Negotiating Two Cultures

Many of the international students come with very high expectations of the United States and sometimes many of them have misguided beliefs. The excitement of coming to America seems to distract them from the culture shock that one is likely to encounter as they migrate into a culture different from their own. Most of these women encountered many events that were culturally different from their own. Three of the 18 women interviewed did not seem overwhelmed by what they saw in the United States. This was because they had travelled to Europe prior to coming to the United States. The majority of the participants, however, had experienced many social and cultural differences. Such cultural differences as experienced by these women can be viewed as trigger events for negotiating differences between the two cultures. These events can be viewed as precursors of transformation as one tries to integrate into the new culture.

Jackie felt very isolated, and did not like the attitude of white people toward blacks. She explains how she felt when she first came:

I wanted to go back immediately. I did not like it at all. For one thing I missed my family back home, my parents and my brothers and sisters. I didn't like the attitude; maybe it had something to do with the place we were. I didn't like the attitude of the people and how they treated us. I didn't like it. My first impression wasn't that good. O.k. in the south the racial tension is very bad, very terrible. You go to church and nobody will sit with you. You are just yourself alone. If you walk down the street, nobody says hi to you. You go to a grocery store; they assume you are coming in there to steal something. In the south there are a lot of black people there and that is how white people

treated us. Especially if you are black and then you are a foreigner it was worse. Because of that I didn't like it at all. My impression of this country is not good.

Vickie's observation was that the American society is very individualistic, and she did not care much about what she termed "public display of affection." She realized that it was natural for people to show affection, "but I think there is a time and place for everything."

Right now I couldn't tell you the names of my next door neighbors. At home you almost need them to the point where they become relatives. I miss that, I don't find that as something that comes readily available over here. This system, this whole society seems to be built on money and if money is not changing hands it looks like it is not worth doing you know. That's very different from the way I grew up. Another thing I find culturally shocking here is the "public display of affection." I have been to Kentucky Fried Chicken to order chicken and I am standing behind a couple and before they can make their order they are hugging and kissing over there. I am going, can't you wait and make your order and get out of my way so I can make my order. I am only here because I am starving and I need some food you know. I don't find it necessary.

Alice attributes her excellent childhood to her parents who were good to them and knew the value of education.

Well, I would say that I was very lucky, I had a very good childhood. My parents were enlightened from the start; they were Christians. They aspired for us to be either nurses or teachers. Other religions like the Muslims at that time did not want their girls to go to school. The situation is different now.

Alice completed her first degree in Nigeria and worked at an agricultural research station. She then went and obtained a master's

degree in Britain. She felt stagnant after returning from Britain, doing the same thing she had been doing before.

I finished my first degree in 1975 and found myself working for the government as a civil servant in agricultural research. Then, luckily in 1981 I had a scholarship to go to Britain for a master's program. I got tired of working at the same job with no advancement. I wanted to explore the world, sort of add variety and better myself, so I decided to come and do a Ph.D. at Iowa State. I was the most qualified at that research station so I got the scholarship.

Alice came with her three kids. To her, coming over was like a blessing in disguise. Alice had been in an abusive relationship, so when she left with her kids that was the end of her marriage. However, she has had some problems financially because her three year scholarship turned out to be one year.

I think my husband back home went and bribed those people not to send me money, and also some jealous or envious people I worked with. This scholarship was supposed to be for 3 years, and all of a sudden they are saying it's too much money. I am working with the international office to try and convince them that they cannot go back on their promise. I hope it works out; if it doesn't I'll have to find a part time job.

Culturally Alice was very disappointed by what she termed "sexual morality," especially among the youths. Here she explains her observation:

One thing that was of concern to me was the moral aspect of life you know. You read of sexually transmitted diseases, especially AIDS--the high immorality among the youth, especially among the youth, really shocked me. The high rate of abuse, especially abuse of children. In fact, I was very much shocked when I came here. Also, I noticed that the youth are talking of their worth and the difficulty of submitting to authority or something

like that. Their morals really disappointed me. I had heard about it, but I didn't know it was this bad. I don't like it.

Alice went on to compare how girls are protected in her culture in contrast to what she has seen here. She says:

Back in my country girls are not so free. Girls are protected right from youth, they are protected. They are taught to be discreet. They are not left to the company of men at any time of day or night. That is why all these abuses are coming up. When girls are too free, when there is no commitment for the girls to be good, they do whatever. The sexual morality in this society is in shambles, and it is very disappointing to me.

Alice is doing well in her program. She got part of the money which she was entitled to. When Alice started her program, she was in a hurry to finish and go back; now she is taking things more slowly and calmly. At age 43, Alice enjoys the company of the Campus Baptist Church of which she is a member. She particularly likes the activities they have for the kids.

Rudo grew up in a Christian family. She was the eldest of four children. Her parents were determined to give her the highest education she could possibly attain. After elementary school, she went to a boarding school for secondary education.

Rudo came to the states twice. The first time she accompanied her husband, and the second time around she came on her own to pursue a Ph.D.

So coming here for the first time was not by my own arrangement. I came on my husband's ticket you know. Coming back after teaching for twelve years was a challenge. Everything was computer and everything was too fast for me, and my husband wasn't there because of his job back home.

At age 43, Rudo is a Ph.D. candidate and a mother of two young adults. She also works as a graduate assistant and admits it does not leave her time for anything else.

I came here without any source of finance from outside. I had to work to pay my way. I was a research assistant and then the following year I was a teaching assistant. Both duties have taken a toll of my study time. Within that frame, I don't have much time to socialize outside of my studies.

When Rudo met her neighbor in the apartment complex where she lived, she was surprised by the "cut and dry" hi she got from her.

That is the first time I had had that kind of cut and dried hi you know. So I concluded that this woman did not have time to say "Hi, how are you today." So I learned very quickly that this society was not kind of personal society where you pay attention to interactions and detailed names. I learned how it is unnecessary to interrupt anybody.

Choni's experience was that of isolation; she explains how she has learned to keep to herself:

Well, the one adaptation I have had to make is people tend to want to live a more private life you know. You kind of go out to visit somebody you have to call them beforehand and make sure it is ok. Culturally, Africans you can just drop in at any time. I have learned to be more by myself. That is one reason why I still think I want to go home you know. I feel like I am living in isolation.

Irene was the eldest and only girl in a family of eight. She did not experience any drawbacks educationally because she was a girl.

My parents took me for what I was. I went to the same school as my brothers. Most people wanted their kids to go to school regardless of sex. At least that was my experience.

After her first degree, her father urged her to come to the states in order to experience a different type of education. Financially Irene

had no problems; her parents were able to pay for her first year, and she was hoping to get a scholarship in order for her to continue.

Irene's impression of Iowa has not been very positive, and socially she has had to deal with racism.

I must say I am a little disappointed; this place is too small and there is nothing to do besides going to school and coming home. I thought everyone was rich--that's what we see back home. Also, I have white friends and Afro-American friends. When my Afro-American friends realized that I had white friends, they did not want to be friends with me anymore. These are just some of the things I had to face here that took some time getting used to. I just had friends. I was not looking at their race, and I think that got me into trouble.

Irene is halfway through with her program. She intends to go on and obtain a doctorate in economics. Irene expresses how she also felt about cultural differences:

People here are so much into themselves. There is so much individualism and it is very difficult to make friends.

Tsitsi grew up in a family which valued education very much. Although her father did not have a college degree, he was very focused on what he wanted his children to do.

I led a sort of sheltered life, just school and a few friends. Ever since I was very young education was the most important thing. It was emphasized by my father and mother. So to me the way I was raised and the emphasis on education was so much that I always looked beyond college. That was his focus. It is really strange because I see here that college education is an option. Some people decide not to go to college. We weren't forced but we were brought up in a way that it wasn't even a choice. This is just a fact of life that you have to go on and get the maximum education that you can.

Tsitsi has two sisters and a brother. She has two aunts and an uncle who hold Ph.D. degrees. She also has an uncle who is a chemist. After she graduated from college she got a job with a central bank in her country. She wanted to go on and obtain a master's degree but at the same time she did not want her parents to pay for her education anymore since they had other children to educate.

A year and a half into my work someone told me to try the American Center because they gave out Fulbright scholarships. I tried that and got accepted and was given a full scholarship and they asked me to choose a school. I had no idea about anything in the United States, what schools, what kind of system they had so they said that they would apply to schools that have my interest. They applied to five schools and I was accepted in all of them, but Iowa State gave me a tuition waiver. So they said that you will save us money and with that money we can send an extra person and so that is how I ended up at Iowa State.

Tsitsi had travelled to Europe numerous times prior to coming to the United States, so she was not overwhelmed by anything when she came over.

I had Indian friends and American and British and Kenyan so I had always lived in a multicultural environment. So when I came to the states it wasn't a transition for me.

Tsitsi went home for a month after her master's degree program. At 27 Tsitsi is halfway through with her Ph.D. degree program and is a very focused student. She got an assistantship with the department after she finished her master's program. She has been at Iowa State University for about four years.

Tsitsi was not surprised by anything culturally because when she was growing up her family had visited England and France several times

so coming to America was not a totally new experience. Her biggest surprise was of the realization that many Americans were ignorant of other parts of the world.

So when I came to the states it wasn't a transition for me. I wasn't overwhelmed by anything because I had had it in little doses in my years of growing up. I was surprised though because a lot of people I met at first didn't have a clue of where I was from; it didn't mean nothing about that area of the world at all. So that was kind of a shock to me a little bit. But gradually when you start understanding their system and their educational system and their mentality about being a super power, you start to understand why they don't know anything. Because they don't really need to. That was the biggest thing when I came to the states, how people just don't know.

Ebba's experience was that of disappointment and amazement. She was coming from a country where apartheid was still being practiced. So coming to a democratic society was very exciting. She was eager to learn how African-Americans had achieved their rights. To her amazement most Americans did not even know where her country was.

Well I wasn't quite pleased, I guess it is because you know you have high expectations. At home I think we just have positive news about America. I was hoping to see models here you know especially of blacks, how they fought the riots, and civil rights movement, how things worked for them. But the major thing that I got is that people do not know where South Africa is. They will say is it next to Nigeria? It was quite an experience.

When Shingai got here, she was surprised that she had to work hard to get whatever she needed. She worked at a place where she felt that she was being judged by who she was and not what she did.

At home we have this notion of the United States being so wealthy and everything comes easy. You don't really have to work hard to get what you want. But when I got here, I found that that wasn't the case. Also, you know cultural differences was a very big shock to me. People don't pay attention to one another you know. Everyone is busy doing their own thing. One major problem was at my workplace. I think they really have a closed society. They don't interact well with foreign students. Whatever you do you are kind of, no matter what you do you can never measure up and that kind of really got to me. They didn't judge based on the kind of work you do, they judged you based on the individual you are. I hated that.

Mukai's late father was a headmaster of an elementary school.

After he passed away, some Presbyterian missionaries adopted her, and after they left some American missionaries took care of her.

When I was younger I happened to be very lucky because my late father used to be a teacher. I ended up with some missionaries from Switzerland after my father died. My mother allowed me to go and stay with them because my chances of a really good education up to this point was because of that kind of arrangement. Not very many kids went to kindergarten; I did. Back in my village most of the children who went to school were boys. The girls' education was not very important. I was lucky that I got the education that I got, that I stayed with those missionaries.

Mukai was passed on to American missionaries after the Presbyterian missionaries left, and that made it possible for her to come to the states.

Like I said, I was very lucky, these American missionaries put me through secondary and teacher training school. I taught elementary school, fourth grade. When they retired and were coming back to the states they asked me to come with them; I was tired of teaching so I was happy to come with them.

I already had a notion about certain things about the American culture so nothing really surprised me.

I knew I had to pick things I liked from the two cultures. So it was a very easy transition for me.

Mukai is 28 years old and is pursuing a Ph.D. degree in child psychology. Things have worked well for her, and she hopes to get married some day and have her own kids.

Farai is an expecting mother who came to the states to join her fiancé. She got married soon after she came here. Both of her parents attained secondary school education. Her upbringing was fairly comfortable:

There were five of us growing up. I have a sister and three brothers. My parents both worked, and they gave us all the chances that were available to go to school. Growing up was pretty neat; I didn't have any hardships. We were not wealthy, but we were not starving either.

After completing her bachelor's degree in Kenya, Farai could not get a job. The economic situation was going down, and there was civil unrest. Her fiancé helped her make up her mind to come to the states.

I completed my degree in April, so I started looking for a job. By December I was still looking and nothing was forthcoming. The government had no money, and they were not employing people. So generally there was no employment anywhere. So I realized at that point that it would take me well over two years just to get a job. So my fiancé urged me to come over, saying that there were better opportunities here.

Financially Farai could not go to the local university to do a master's program because her parents were both retired.

When I applied at the local university, I got admitted but I needed money for tuition. After hosting three fundraising parties, I only had money for one semester. So this was not going to work.

In the end Farai contacted an American girlfriend of hers whom she had lived with in Kenya for a year. Her parents agreed to be her host family. Even though she was coming to join her fiancé, it was difficult for her to leave her family. She says:

Despite what people say, you still feel like a little girl. I cried and cried. It was just the fact that I was going to a strange place and possibly the only person that I knew was my fiancé. It was frightening and strange, and it was all very difficult.

Farai is doing very well in her food technology program. She gets along very well with her major professor. She intends to pursue a doctorate after her master's program.

Farai attributes her success thus far to the fact that she has learned to be assertive and has developed some confidence in herself. She says

One thing is, I think from what I have noticed, people tend to listen to you more if you are assertive. At home if you want something you have to be humble. You can't afford to be assertive or nothing will be done for you. The gatekeeper will not let you go in, you have to beg. Here it is the other way around.

Negotiating cultures poses a critical phase in the process of adjustment. In a way it calls upon the integrity of the individual to accommodate the new culture without compromising their own.

Building Support Network

After people find themselves in a different culture and environment, there is a tendency to identify with those persons or individuals that form a support system for them. Consciously or

unconsciously one begins to network as a way of seeking clarity to a seemingly confusing state of affairs. This networking could be a response to a social, cultural or educational dilemma. The following are some excerpts from the interviews on how some of these women networked. Some of the networking came through friendships, meeting people, affiliation with a church, and through other graduate students.

Educationally Vickie had a very good advisor who was a good listener and kept her abreast of the educational system here. This is what she had to say about her academic advisor:

I was fortunate to have an excellent advisor. That helped. She tried not to do everything, spoonfeed me but at every stage she explained what she was doing, why I needed to take this as a prerequisite to that. Socially she was like a mother to me, she listened, gave advice and yet always let me make the final decision.

When Vickie got a divorce, she got a lot of support from her church and the shelter home where she lived for a while. Her network system was not always positive. When she was reaching out for help from the international office, one advisor encouraged her to pack her bags and go home because nobody was going to help her.

Once I discussed my problems with the elders at the church. They were very helpful in that they assured me they would be there for me no matter what decision I made. The women at the shelter-home were very encouraging and sympathetic. It was great finding out that there were other people with similar problems I had. One of the biggest disappointments I encountered was with the international student office; I was seeking for help and this particular advisor told me to pack my bags and go home. And that was the day I challenged myself to stay more than ever.

Tsitsi had visited Europe numerous times with her family. She had been exposed to different cultures, so mixing with people from other nationalities was not a problem for her. The students from her country were ready to help her as soon as she got here which eased her way into the culture.

I had gone to an international school; I had Indian friends, American, British and Kenyan, so I always lived in a multicultural environment. I was very lucky; I hadn't even gotten out of the motel and everything was already taken care of. I had a place to live. When I came to the university I had to take some tests and then my advisor told me which classes to take. I made friends with a white American girl from Iowa I met in my first class. She is now a very close friend of mine. She took me shopping, gave me her car to take a driver's test, she showed around and what to do. So I was very lucky because I immediately found people who took me under their wings so to speak. I had a very good experience.

Even though Tsitsi had a very good advisor, she said that she relied more on other graduate students in terms of class selection.

She says:

Well, I had one meeting with my advisor and that was it. I basically relied on other students on what to take. Well, the advisor was helpful, but I always found, I always went back to the people who had already taken the classes and I found that they gave me not better advice but just more practical for me as a student. I mean even my advisor, she told me, go and talk to the other students and see, I mean she relies on just the paper which is in front of her. They tell me what kind of professor is better or helpful. Sometimes there are classes taught one semester by one professor and another semester by another. So they would say don't take this class this semester with this professor. I get more information out of students than I do from my advisor.

Academically Choni has done very well. She feels that this is so because the Engineering department has a very high percentage of foreign students and it makes her feel at ease.

Well, my department is full of foreigners you know and so it is less intimidating to me. I have noticed though that American students in that department tend to keep to themselves. I guess I don't have anything in common with them so I don't hang out with them after school.

Choni also feels that because her major professor is a foreigner he is more helpful and understanding and the fact that she is the only black female in her department pursuing a Master's degree works to her advantage.

I think my favorite professor is an Indian professor; he did his major with my major professor. I can relate to him better than some of the other professors that I have had. The weather is really bad, and I've thought of leaving several times but my department and the professors are really nice and helpful so I decided to stay. Also being the only black female, people have been quite helpful and kind of accommodating.

Although Mazvita was thrilled by the idea of coming to join her husband, she was scared because she was leaving people and places she was familiar with. "It was difficult to leave because that's where I knew how to function." Once here, Mazvita was overwhelmed by the many responsibilities she had to shoulder as a mother, a student, and holding a job.

At home I had all the help I needed in terms of childcare and housekeeping. Then all of a sudden I had to do all of that in addition to being a student. That was tough. I felt like my two kids were more of a burden than a joy. I felt tied down. Even though there were babysitters I wasn't comfortable with that. I had to learn from other

mothers how they did it by just observation and asking questions.

Many of Mazvita's friends encouraged her to ask her husband to help more with the kids and housework. Fortunately, she did not have to ask him because he took it upon himself to help. Here she expresses how the situation was for her:

Pressure of work can easily lead to breakage of family or neglect of children. My husband has willingly recognized the burden I face being a student, going to work, and being a mother. He empathizes with my situation and appreciates me more than before. He takes it upon himself to help around the house and take care of the kids. I don't think this would have ever happened had we stayed at home.

The support network system is a very important aspect of any person's life. It is even more important to a foreign student in a different culture and environment. These women formed networks with other graduate students, advisors, major professors, friends and church members. Having a network system that works can be viewed as an important stepping stone to achieving set goals.

Community Experiences

Besides the university community, there is also the local community which one has to contend with during their sojourn. People at the shopping mall, the grocery store, and the churches are all part of the larger community with which these women had to associate. The women quoted below had different unpleasant experiences within the local community at some point of their stay.

Farai's experience with the Catholic church she had joined left her perplexed and wondering. She talks of an event that had happened to her.

Well, one thing that really occurred to me, something that really disturbed me was, we are Catholic--my family. When I came here I needed to sign up to join the Catholic fellowship at St. Thomas Aquinas. After sending that, about three weeks later I got a letter with a number of things, they were telling me about the system of education you know. I should tell them how much I could give the church every year. They said, these envelopes are the ones that you use, and the envelopes were numbered. So I didn't do anything about it, and I put them aside. So after some time I got another letter saying oh, our records show that you have not donated. You have donated 0 dollars to the church, and we wonder what is happening, you know. So I started to think, these people don't know me, they don't know where I am coming from, they don't know how much money I have, they don't know how I am surviving here, and instead of asking me to go and meet with them and just trying to get to know me, the first thing they want from me is money. To me it was very disturbing. It affected me quite a bit to the extent that it has kept me from going to church from then to now. It's something that I have never forgotten.

Lisa came from a large family of six girls and two boys. This did not hinder her parents in educating them since at that time it was considered a waste of time educating girls. This was because girls would get married and go away, thereby benefitting someone else.

My father was a strict disciplinarian and a teacher so he always kind of pushed us. The fact that there were so many girls in the family, he didn't want to limit our options of what we wanted to do. So in my household the education thing was really emphasized. It was always "You have to get more education. You have to get more education." Just kind of growing up you got that feeling that you were heading

towards something bigger. You aspired for more education because that's what was preached in my household.

Lisa is a mother raising two children of her own and a younger sister whom she brought to the states when she first came. Two weeks after Lisa had been married her husband had to leave for the states. It took her eight months to get a scholarship to come and join him.

This thirty-six year old graduate student found herself in a dilemma when her husband went home a year ago and was detained by his government because he had not honored a contract which had previously brought him here.

We lost several family members, so my husband was forced to go home and it happened that he got stuck over there. That left me here with three dependent kids to look after. That has been a very hard time for us. It's like you're going insane or something.

Lisa is holding several part time jobs and going to school part time in addition to taking care of her children. She will be taking her written preliminaries this July.

I have been in this country since 1984 and I am glad that I got myself involved in different aspects of life in this country because I don't think I could have handled it. I was so frightened I almost packed my bags and left but through encouragement from friends I have been able to sustain myself and my kids.

One of Lisa's disappointments is the treatment she gets in the community. She shares her frustration:

You know I like to go shopping, and I have noticed that the clerks in the stores follow you around. It has happened on so many occasions, and I don't think it's an accident. I just feel like telling them

that I am just like any other shopper here, you don't need to follow me around. I don't just go to any store anymore; I kind of select where to shop.

Rufaro also had a bad experience at a retirement home where she was working. She says:

Before I started school, I had to work to make ends meet. I worked in this retirement home where I could never do anything right. One day my supervisor told me that I smelled. She was holding her nose and she sent me to the bathroom. That struck my self-esteem. I will never forget that. My workmates told me that they didn't smell anything. This incident ended up in the affirmative action office. I never felt so frustrated and humiliated in my life. I accepted this woman's apology. After a while I quit my job there.

Rufaro was one of four children. Her parents were able to send all of her brothers and sisters to school.

My parents were both very eager about education. They didn't have a lot of money, but they made it a point that all of us went to school. I finished my bachelor's and my master's degrees at home, and I was teaching before I came here.

Rufaro came to join her husband who had come to pursue a Ph.D. in sociology. It was not easy for her to stay behind with a newborn baby, and at the same time it was difficult for her to leave home for that's where she knew how to function.

At the beginning, I didn't go to school. I worked to make ends meet. My desire was to do a Ph.D., and so I really became depressed staying at home. My husband and I talked about it, and we decided that I should try going to school. It was not easy being a mother, a student and to carry a part time job.

Fortunately for Rufaro, her husband took it upon himself to help in the home and with the kids. She says:

Things are looking up now; I kind of see a light at the end of the tunnel. I am thankful that my husband helps. I don't think this could have ever happened if we stayed at home.

At age 34, Rufaro is a mother of two and is halfway through with her course work.

Thus the local community plays a significant role in shaping the international student's perception of acceptance.

College Experience

As students embark on their studies in their various areas of study, they encounter different experiences. Some of these experiences are positive while others are negative. Such experiences determine the success or failure of the student involved depending on how the student responds to the situation. The following are some of the college experiences these women experienced: ethnocentrism, racism, communication problems, and testing issues.

Pam was one of six children, three boys and three girls. She was finishing off her Ph.D. program at the time of the interview. Her father was a college graduate and her mother had finished high school. Pam did not consider herself a typical example of a girl growing up in her country.

My father valued education very much. When we grew people used to say that our life was like the English style of life. Everything was organized on time. Maybe it is because my father used to go to England a lot and some part of his professional life was in a British organization. So when we grow up we almost have everything at home, games and toys, everything children can get we used to get. Plus, he wanted us to learn how to swim, how to ride

horses, this type of thing which is not typical around that time.

At the age of three, Pam attended kindergarten which belonged to missionaries. She was very close to her brother who was five. She was a very bright student, always at the top of her class even though she was the youngest in each grade. Pam finished her secondary school and went on to attend college in her country. She graduated with a bachelor's degree in Zoology and taught at a women's university. Pam married whilst she was in college. Her husband was a high ranking military officer.

Pam had always thought of coming to the United States to visit. She was fortunate in that her college had a linkage program with Iowa State and she was selected to come.

What happened is in March of '86 they have a linkage between Iowa State and my university. Through this linkage we have a staff exchange someone of our staff would come here for master's degree, and someone from here would go and do some sort of curriculum development, training, workshops. At that time there is no person who is ready in my department to come. They asked me if I would like to go and do a master's in nutrition. I thought about it then I said I think I can go. I had to talk to my husband about it first.

Pam came to Iowa State and completed a master's degree in two years and went back to teach in her country. Three years later she returned to pursue a Ph.D. which she has successfully completed and is back in her country teaching at a women's college. Pam spent five years at Iowa State as a graduate student. She was 39 years old at the time she completed her degree.

One major problem these participants encountered had to do with advising and directing of the student's program of study given the two different systems of education. Here is how Pam described her initial college experience:

I didn't find anyone in this department to help me in terms of choosing classes. Noone explained to me why I had to take certain classes at a particular time. You see I was coming from a system where you didn't pick and choose classes. You had to take given classes and that was it. When I met with my advisor, the meeting was so brief and frustrating so I had to depend on other graduate students.

Irene, too, shared similar negative experiences about advising:

But one problem I had was adapting to this education system. Because I was used to, you are doing this course, this is what you are doing blah blah-- straight forward things. Here the system is such that it is so liberal and so flexible that if you don't have any direct purpose you just keep on meandering from one place to another. It was just too much for me.

Even though Farai had a good advisor, his assumption of what Farai was capable of doing created problems for her. She says:

My biggest problem was using the computer. My major professor as good as he was assumed I knew how to do a lot of things which I really didn't. So that made me work extra hard to cut the deficit. I had been used to being told what to do; this was very challenging. It was just survival from day to day.

Many of these women had observed that they were not given equal opportunity and treatment as graduate students by the professors with whom they worked.

On discrimination Pam says:

One thing I found or didn't like is that you always feel like you are treated differently. So I always held back. I know there are problems of

discrimination among black people here, but I didn't consider myself as a United States citizen. Even when people know you are not an African-American and that you are here for a specific purpose, they still discriminate against you. You are even considered worse because you are coming from a so called "primitive society."

Jackie describes how she felt discriminated on how assistantships were granted. She also felt that her major professor did not respect her as much as she did the other graduate students who were white.

Every time I apply for an assistantship the reply is "Oh, sorry, there are no assistantships" and they will pass me and give that assistantship to an incoming master's student. Also my major professor, I don't know whether she has ever had a black student for a graduate student or not. The way she treats me is different from the way she treats her other students. She is always putting me down. One day I even told her I am not an American.

The professor told Jackie not to go to her to ask for favors. Jackie responded to her by saying,

"You are my major professor. What am I supposed to do if I have a problem with anything that has to do with my program of study here? Who should I go to?" She treats me very badly. But then when you see her with her other master's students, the treatment she gives them you will think, is this the same person?

Vickie did not like the practices and policies that went on in her department. These had to do with awarding of assistantships and course grades. Here she explains her experience:

The one experience that I have not particularly enjoyed has been some of the experiences I have had as a graduate student. Those relate mainly to the granting of assistantships and the bureaucracy that is in there--the favoritism, and you wonder the process by which the graduate assistantships are awarded. There obviously were people that I doubted their caliber and yet you know they would get away with a half time assistantship and I would be given

a quarter time and even then I have to do a lot of arm twisting to come up with it. It makes you wonder, is it because I am from Africa. Then you find professors who have also had predetermined grades for you because you are from Africa, and they assume you don't even know what it means by numerical and they have to spell it out and tell you one, two, three. You know what I mean, just underestimating your capability as a graduate student just because you are from that dark continent. I think that is for me the most unfortunate experience that anybody can go through not allowing graduate students the liberty to be graduate students and to be able to explore given the equal opportunities to advance in the profession. For me that was in fact to the point where if there is any regret at all and if I have felt discriminated against in this country it has been in my own department. My own academic department which is a very sad commentary as far as I am concerned.

Other problems educationally involved issues such as lectures which are not inclusive in order to cater to the diverse audience in the classroom, attitudes of some professors toward foreign students, and communication problems. Pam comments on how prejudiced some of the professors she dealt with were and how ethnocentric their lectures were.

First of all when you tell a professor that this is what you want to do they underestimate you. Many think we cannot do the work. They don't know how we operate. Most of my nutrition classes dealt with Americans. For example, food tables, weight and height charts and so on. I cannot apply that to my teaching at home. I wish they made an effort of at least, how that can be used on a different nationality.

Jackie's experience made her change majors after she could not relate to what was being taught.

I came here, and I almost completed a year in sociology but I got tired of the kind of things they

were talking about. Everything is theories, theories, theories. You don't see how that applies to real situations. I got tired of it and I wanted to do something different.

Mukai's experience was that of a professor who had negative stereotypes and prejudicial remarks about blacks. She explains:

When I first came I had a professor who, there were two of us blacks in the class and she would always say things like, "You two are different from all the blacks that I know." A lot of times when she was teaching she would say "But blacks don't do it this way because they don't know this. But I don't know about the blacks in Africa. Africa is different."

Tina commented on how she had to overcome attitude problems and lack of respect from professors. Academically Tina had problems understanding some of her professors and being understood because of her accent.

I had to overcome attitude problems because I realized I was an international student and especially an African student you have to prove yourself that you are able to perform your classes and keeping up with other students. After they see that you can understand and make the grade some attitudes change. So I had to experience a lot of problems in terms of people just trying, I don't know, treating me like a kid. I just wanted to be treated like any other student.

Tina got frustrated with professors who were not flexible enough to accept the British way of spelling.

The way we pronounce, the way we write and spell is different. I was determined not to let it stand in my way and it paid off, because you know I made efforts even with my African accent because every time you open your mouth there is always someone who will say "Oh, you have an accent; where do you come from?"

Tina came from a large family. They belonged to the Catholic church. Her father was a school teacher.

We were eight children in my family, five sisters and three brothers. I remember being very keen about school. My father liked us to go to school and learn someday to be a teacher. He gave all his children an equal opportunity to go to school.

The sisters at the Catholic school where she went were very encouraging of girls to go to school. After her undergraduate degree, Tina worked for a company called Agrico as a teaching assistant. When Tina came to the states her financial situation changed so she had to work to help pay part of her tuition and living expenses.

My employer partially and the University of Dakar had an agreement between the two to help people come to study development. When I got here I had to participate in the financing because the fees had gone up and my country was in some kind of trouble and could not relieve the dollar. I did cash register, I did tables and floors and serving food in the university food production. I did it all.

Tina got divorced just after she came here; her husband did not want to wait for her. Here she describes her situation:

Even though coming here cost me my marriage, I really don't regret it too much because education is very important to me. My husband got somebody else and got married; he couldn't wait for me. Those are some of the things I feel that you choose when you come away so far from home. At first I was in shock because I had barely been here, but you learn quickly to put things into perspective. I think I am better off this way. I still think even if I knew this was going to happen I still would have come because it is important and crucial for a female to be self-supportive, especially economically.

Tina is halfway through with her Ph.D. program in home economics/agricultural education. She is happy with the way things have turned out.

Jackie remembers many occasions when racist remarks were made by professors in regards to her performance.

He told me to my face, "I am surprised. I didn't think you would be able to do that. I didn't think you would be able to get an A from this class."

At another time Jackie was going over her program of study with her advisor. Upon noticing the good grades she had acquired, he commented:

"You surprise me. I didn't think you were that good, you surprise me."

She went on to explain that it seems like their first impression of a black student is that you are not going to make it. You always have to prove yourself.

Ebba experienced similar racist remarks from professors in her field. She worked in a laboratory where they use a lot of expensive instruments. She says:

I don't get support at all. One of the professors goes and talks to the other technicians and other students behind my back. Every time she talks to me she says, "remember this is a very expensive instrument, remember how to use it." I mean she talks to me like she's talking to a child. It is very frustrating when professors have preconceived ideas about African students. Usually when you're looking for negatives in a person most of the time you can always get them or make some up.

Here Ebba comments about an incident that happened when her child was sick and she could not take an examination with the rest of the

class, her professor said, "You had better decide whether you are going to stay home and be a mother or be a student."

Another concern which most of the participants talked about was that of communication. Some cases had to do with not understanding the professor and in other instances students shied away from participation because they spoke differently.

Here is how Dede explained her communication problems:

I had problems understanding my professors who like spoke really fast. We have difference in how we pronounce certain words and how we spell certain words so I had to adjust to all that. The professors were giving a lot of information at the same time and not enough time to go over all they had covered. I tried to socialize with a lot of them and I shared a house with two Americans. That was helpful.

Dede grew up in a small town. She attended public school for seven years and then went to high school. Her father was a minister of religion. Dede had nine brothers and sisters. She is 34 years old.

I did high school up to sixth form in 1983. At that time I wanted to get into nursing school, but it was difficult because at that time there were only two big hospitals which were training nurses and I didn't have good results in my sixth form.

Dede tried a lower level nursing school where she qualified but did not stay there long; she didn't like doing the "dirty jobs." She then went to a teacher training college and was there for one month. Her scholarship application came through and in August of 1985 she left her country for Arizona.

I couldn't go to the local university because I couldn't qualify. I really liked education but not

to train in my country. I wanted to go to the bigger university but I couldn't qualify. So I looked around and said there has got to be somewhere where I can go so I came to the United States. There were scholarships which were being given out by the United States; it was a program which helps international students to go out of their country and study. It was mainly for those interested in education. So I got one of them.

Dede went back to her country after she had completed her bachelor's degree. She was a high school teacher. In 1989 she got married and moved to teach at another high school where her husband was. She also had a baby that same year she had been married. Dede's husband got a scholarship to come and study at Iowa State.

Automatically, I wanted to come too. I had to leave my child with my parents because this was an opportunity for me to do a master's degree. It was hard to leave my child but at the same time I knew that this was a very good opportunity for me to further my education.

Dede is about to complete her master's program and hopes to go back to her country during the summer of 1993.

Chipo grew up in the rural area where her parents were peasant farmers. Her parents were Christians, and this helped them in educating all their eight children.

My father used farming as a source of income, but he would always say that he wasn't a farmer. Missionaries had introduced Christianity in my village way before I was born, and my parents became Christians. I think that was what made them educate the eight of us, four boys and four girls. Not many in our village went to school, so we were very lucky.

After secondary school Chipo went to an agricultural college where she took farm implements as a major. She worked for the

government after completion of her degree. She felt that she was not progressing as a soil and water conservation officer. She couldn't be promoted because of her educational level. She requested for sponsorship' and was granted a partial scholarship. Here Chipso describes her situation:

There was very high competition at my job, so I realized that I was going to work for a long time before I got any promotion. When they agreed to partially sponsor me, I was very happy and took the opportunity.

Not everyone was eager to see Chipso leave; her mother, mother-in-law, and everyone else were opposed to her coming over. Her husband was supportive. Chipso explains:

It was extremely difficult to come. I left my kids who were 7 and 5 at the time. It was really critical, but I didn't see any other opportunity, so I decided to come. My own mother and my mother-in-law were really against it.

Chipso's experience in some of her classes were of frustration, and she felt intimidated to participate.

The worst thing like in class is the accent. You ask a question and it's like what did you say? So even if I wanted to answer questions, the first thing I have to think about is will people look at me strangely, like what the heck am I saying? It makes you very uncomfortable. Even going to a professor, that would still be a bottleneck. You don't want to get to someone and you can't communicate effectively. You feel you are saying the right thing, and he doesn't understand you. And then in some classes even the spelling, because you are from the British background. Some of the spellings are kind of different. Professors really don't care about that. They want you to write it the American way, although they know it is right in the British way. It was frustrating, particularly in English courses--really frustrating.

Chipo was put on academic probation when she could not cope with what was going on in her life. She describes the circumstances that this came about:

I had thought I would--you know, bring my kids and I couldn't. This has been going on for four years. I worked hard and raised enough money for their tickets. I bought the tickets, moved into a two bedroom apartment and they didn't come. Apparently somebody thinks that I don't want to go back home. This preoccupied my mind so much so that I couldn't study. I couldn't concentrate, and I couldn't make the grades. This happened twice and was very disruptive to my studies.

Chipo attributes her turnaround success to one of the advisors in the international office who sat her down and put things into perspective for her. She says:

This lady had realized the hardships and the difficult time I was having. She told me, "Look, you shouldn't put your hopes high. Accept defeat and that you can plan so hard and sometimes it doesn't work. You should accept it." She told me that it would be a shame if I didn't graduate. So she said, "You just have to study and put all this aside." So I did just that, and by the end of the semester I was off probation. I know that someday down the line I will see my kids. This lady really helped me.

At age 43 Chipo will be graduating with a master's degree in agronomy. She would have loved to stay and continue with a Ph.D., but because of her kids she feels obligated to go back.

Mazvita is the youngest of five children. All her siblings went to the university. She never experienced discrimination going to school because of her gender. Mazvita came from an above average family according to her country's standard of living. So she did not have problems with money for school when she was in her country. All

she had to do was study hard and get good grades and her family was able to pay her way through school. She was a very bright student and upon completion of her master's degree she hoped that she could complete her studies in the United States.

After finishing the master's degree I decided to, I hope and it was my hope to come to complete my study in the United States. And already I was working as a researcher. I could have finished it in my country but I know that there is more facility here and here the education is more advanced.

Mazvita applied for a scholarship with United States International Development and was lucky enough to get one. She was very happy to get the opportunity to come and study overseas. She had lived in a big city before with one of her brothers so she wasn't scared of the new environment and fast life. Here Mazvita explains the differences she experienced educationally.

Every student who comes to a new country will find a difference from your culture. From the educational point of view it is completely different from the system in your country. It is advanced. The system is completely different and it took time to accommodate with the system here.

Mazvita describes how hard her first semester was:

The first semester I didn't communicate with people. It was very difficult also, taking classes was difficult. I used to tape the class lectures because the profs' pronunciations were completely different. Even though I did well in my classes. I started gradually to talk to some people as the semester went along. It really took a lot of time. It was not easy.

Mazvita is twenty-nine years old and is pursuing a Ph.D. degree in veterinary medicine. She has had problems socially and

educationally and she is trying to rectify that. She expects to complete her program in a year and plans to return to her country.

Some other educational concerns expressed by these women included the type of testing at graduate level and also use of the computer.

Tina laughingly talks about how she learned to type:

Everything is computerized. There is no way you can survive without knowing. I had to learn it all. I didn't have the money to pay someone to type my papers. Those were some of the hardest things I remember. I bought a typewriter and I would sit up the whole night typing a three page paper.

Several women did not care for the type of testing some professors used at the graduate level. The following are some of their comments.

Rudo had been in the states before, but when she came back the second time around she noticed a big change. She shares her observation and feelings about examinations at the graduate level.

But coming back this time to the computer age and technology, everything is so fast. One disappointment I have with this is the emphasis on examinations at the Ph.D. level you know. I think there are other ways of assessing you besides making you write with pencil and paper within a restricted time. I just think at my level I am more into synthesis and not memorizing and writing exams. So I would have wished for more personal interactions, where you kind of work with your professor closely. I need that kind of preparation to enable me to work within the setting you know.

Mukai was not particularly excited about the method of testing.

She says:

One thing I hated was the multiple choice type of exams. I think that at graduate level having a multiple choice exam does not test your ability as a graduate student.

Lisa shared the same dissatisfaction regarding testing. Here she explains how she felt about the situation.

One thing that I found kind of hard was the multiple choice stuff. You are not given the chance to express yourself, to write what you know about the subject. That was kind of hard to get used to. It was also difficult for me to get used to jumping in when the professor was lecturing. I was used to waiting for the lecturer to entertain questions when he/she was ready. Sometimes you get the feeling that if you don't say anything they think that you are not following what's going on. In the end I got used to it but I had to force myself to open up.

The foregoing quotations are a good indication that there are many challenges that these women encounter as they pursue their various studies. This being the core of their sojourn can be the determinant factor of their successes or failures. These issues have to be resolved in order for these women to move on. How they resolve some of these challenges will be the researcher's next topic of discussion.

Resolving Issues/Coping

To reiterate Mezirow (1991) on transformative theory, "it is not so much what happens to people but how they interpret and explain what happens to them that determines their actions, hopes, contentment, well-being, and performance" (p. xiii). Hence the different experiences these women encountered culturally, socially and educationally required solutions. It was necessary for them to evaluate the different situations they were in and to make a decision on what to do in order for them to achieve their goals.

Studies done by Mezirow (1991), Morgan (1987), Williams (1986), and Hunter (1980) all attest to the idea that, "it is not enough to understand intellectually the need to change the way one acts but that one requires emotional strength and an act of will in order to move forward" (p. 171). Here is how some of the participants in this study resolved their issues in order for them to move forward.

Pam resolved her problems by immersing herself in her books day and night. She said that she tried to keep her identity by showing positive things about her country.

I keep myself very busy. I study a lot and I try to do my assignments way ahead of time. I dress in my traditional clothes all the time. I have some beautiful silk garbs and I am proud of it. I also participated more in campus activities each time I got an opportunity to. I cooked delicious foods from my country for food fairs and also participated in panel discussions wherever diversity was discussed.

Pam was asked to have an exit interview with the chairperson of her department. She told him/her her feelings about how international students could be helped through advising.

I think that at least the advisors and supervisors of international students should have some type of international experience. I mean someone who has visited other countries, someone who has visited other cultures and knows that there are differences between people. If you have good supervision, it will make your life a little easier. Also that professors should not be biased because you are from another country. I can't come here to play and not get my education.

Jackie has resolved to cope with whatever is going on around her without putting up a fight. She believes that challenging her major professor will only prolong her stay here.

I keep telling myself that I am a Ph.D. student and she is my major professor so if I want to fight with her and say everything that I think is wrong, I put my degree in jeopardy. I want to get out of here so let me just go with whatever I am doing so I can have my degree and go away from here. When I come home sometimes I talk with my husband and he tells me the same thing.

Even though she goes by what her major professor wants, Jackie feels that she has overcome a lot of people trying to put her down and discourage her.

Nothing has been able to discourage me so far. The thing that bothers me most is the racial relationships I do not understand that. When I was at home I never felt that people see other people differently. I always thought people were people, so I never differentiated between black and white until I came here.

Although Vickie solely depended on her husband financially, she consciously made a decision to get out of this abusive relationship.

I think the most troublesome part was when I was going through my divorce. Being six thousand miles away from home with no family and support and I had just barely been here. I hadn't been even here for a year yet so I hadn't built my own support system. Not only was I having to deal with the fact that my family was falling apart but also I had to deal with a lot of physical pain because that was what necessitated the divorce. Economically it was suicide for me because my ex-husband was the one person I was dependent on for everything. So making that decision was to some people the most stupid thing I could have ever done because I didn't have my own two feet. It was almost as if I was perching on his shoulder and here I said I didn't need his shoulder anymore.

Vickie worked day and night around her class schedule. She worked in the library, cleaned the laundromat, delivered the Des Moines Register in order to survive. When Vickie went to seek help in

the international office an advisor suggested to her that she should pack her bags and go home. To that she says:

And that was the day I challenged myself to stay more than ever, I became very determined. I am going to do whatever it takes; I am not going to leave Iowa State without a degree. I knew what was in store for me but I never looked back and I have never really looked back yet.

Tsitsi talked at length about the Islamic religion. She described how it is used to manipulate women in her country. She was very saddened to see her friends from college who used to be career oriented women but because they had gotten married they had completely changed. Tsitsi made a decision that she was not going to just teach economics, but that she was going to be a part of a force that influences women in terms of their direction and goal achievement. The following is how Tsitsi described the whole situation.

There are certain things that, however, are imposed by society that are not Islamic and that they have sort of found their way into being called Islamic for some reason. A lot of the things that socially women are not supposed to do have no Islamic basis at all. Islamically education is very important for both men and women. Men have found ways to--what better way than to tell a woman that God wants you to do this. Now there is a movement to get an education so that you know your rights because you grow up with the men telling you what your rights are, you don't know your rights. If you are from the Islamic fundamentalist party it is your passport to success. It's all politics. It has nothing to do with religion whatsoever. Nothing to do with religion.

Tsitsi discussed how she wanted to be an agent of change and help women in her country to be in control of their lives. This is how Tsitsi saw the situation of women in her country.

So when I went back I was critical of a lot of things. I noticed that a lot of my female colleagues in college that were very bright and intelligent either came to college as a pastime until they got married and after marriage they are controlled by their husbands completely. It is almost as if they are programmed; when they get married they switch. I have had friends that were career oriented that were very intelligent and that wanted to go on to get their master's and Ph.D. but as soon as they got married they changed to the subservient role. It frustrated me, why should the women always have to sacrifice. It seems to me that the woman as soon as she reaches that point where she gets married her future immediately diverts and just changes completely. The man is not expected to adjust to the woman's future but the woman is expected to do that for the man. I would like to be an influence to women. I think my influence in addition to teaching the academics would make a change in someone's life. I would like to be part of a force that influences women. What I have gained more when I came to this country is the respect for my culture. I would like to work within the system in order to be effective but at the same time make some changes.

Tsitsi's description of her visit home can be related to Mezirow's theory of experiencing trigger events that lead to reflections and transformation. Her decision to work within the system in order to make changes and help these women realize their self-worth, and that they be content with the "self" reflects on her realization of who she is.

Dede explained to me how the experience of coming to America has impacted her whole life and the way she perceives life in general.

I am really happy that I am accomplishing what interests me, what I like to do. As you grow up and look at your past experiences. Things that you used to do and how you used to look at things becomes different as you grow older and you read more. Maybe psychologically you change, you look at things in a different way. You compare yourself with some

people and how they look at some things and how you look at them is quite different.

She went on to explain the change in her that she attributes to coming to America. She also compares "educated" people in this country to the ones in her country.

This country has made a change in me that I would say is really outstanding in the way I look at people in my country when I go back. Many people look down upon people who never had a chance to go to school. So when I look at them, instead of looking down at them I have the feeling how can I help them do better. Like how can I make a difference in my country. There are a lot of people who can't read and write and when they look at people who can, they see us as small gods. I want such people to perceive me as part of them. If there is something I can do to improve them I must do it. Because the moment I look down upon them, that means I am shattering them. I think in my society people sort of oppress these kinds of people. Educated people in this society help other people. My society brings people down. So I want to try and help those people so they can better themselves.

One of Lisa's biggest challenges came when her husband had to go back home. Several members of his family had died, so he was forced to go home. When it was time for him to come back he was detained. That left Lisa with three dependent kids to look after with no steady income. Lisa describes her dilemma with teary eyes:

Because it was not expected, it just happened, then you say to yourself where do I go from here? Where do I start? That has been a very trying time for me. It's like you wonder how do you go on. I had to change my whole attitude because I felt like these kids are dependent on me and if I break apart what happens to all of us. I had to make decisions about the children and about myself in order to sustain ourselves. Everything was on my shoulders, school work, being a mother and a father, everything.

Lisa thinks that this whole ordeal has made her a better, stronger person. She has discovered strength within her that she did not know she possessed.

The initial stage was fright and panic, but I was the only one to make decisions so I had to do it. I think I have come out a stronger individual maybe than when my husband was here. I have gotten a lot of strength from talking to friends I have met by sharing my story--most of these are graduate students and people from church. That has given me strength to carry on. It's been a learning experience. It has been hard but somehow you keep on going and try to accept your situation and try to do something about it instead of crying about it. I have discovered some strengths I didn't know I had. I just looked around at so many good models for me of women who have gone through so much and yet they come out on top. That has really made a difference in my life and has helped me go through a hard time. I am more focused in what I do. I have realized my inner strength. My husband wasn't there anymore so I had to rediscover myself. I have learned certain habits and techniques for survival.

According to Boyd and Myers (1988), one of the major aims of education is that of helping individuals work towards acknowledging and understanding the dynamics between their inner and outer worlds. This means the expansion of consciousness and working toward a meaningful integrated life as evidenced in authentic relationships with self and others. These women had different experiences during their stay at Iowa State which ranged from being discriminated against socially and educationally, experiences of racism, failed marriages, different cultural norms, and for some the whole experience of coming to America. Their experiences made them move in one way or another from one level or stage in their lives to another. The majority of the women expressed that the difficult times they had experienced made

them better people in the end. They discovered inner strengths which they did not know they possessed. This has enabled them to change their perspectives on life and has enabled them to carry on and to accomplish their goals. Overall, most of the women attested to the fact that their coming to America was an eye-opening experience and that it has made them better people than they were before.

In this chapter, themes and subthemes generated from the interview transcriptions were presented. The interviews focused on the lives of these women as young girls growing up in their countries, what prompted them to come to the United States, the impact of migration and culture shock as they tried to adapt and adjust to their new environment, their experiences with the university community and the larger Ames community, and lastly, how they coped with the situations in which they found themselves.

CHAPTER V. DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The purpose of this study was to find out whether female international graduate students from Africa go through a transformation as they pursue higher education at Iowa State University. The research questions the study sought to answer are restated below:

- What happens to people when they migrate to a culture different from their own?
- What are some of the problems they encounter in their new environment and culture?
- How do they go about resolving the encountered problems in order to achieve their goal(s)?

In order for the researcher to have an understanding of the participants' life stories told in their own words, eighteen in-depth interviews were conducted. The interviews were transcribed, and the data were analyzed. Brief summaries on all of the participants' background were highlighted. This was done to acquaint the reader with a general description of who these participants were.

For the purposes of analysis, the data were categorized using themes that emerged from the interviews. Common themes that emerged from the data were:

- Decision Making: Here participants expressed what prompted them to come to the United States to study. For some, their spouses were already here so they came to join them, and in the process took advantage of the opportunity to attain higher education. The
-

other participants came on their own, mostly on some type of scholarship.

- **Negotiating Two Cultures:** Once here, most of these women got a rude awakening of the differences in culture. This prompted learning to adjust and adapt.
- **Building Support Network:** This stage came about as these women were trying to seek clarity to a seemingly confusing state of affairs. They reached out to different people for clarity and support in order to move forward.
- **Community Experiences:** Apart from the university community, these women had to contend with the larger Ames community. The shopping malls, the grocery stores, and the churches all formed part of the larger community with which they had to associate.
- **College Experience:** This formed the core of the participants' experiences during their sojourn. Their college experiences included such subthemes as ethnocentrism, racism, communication, and testing issues. They had to deal with some of these issues on a daily basis.
- **Resolving Issues/Coping:** The different situations and encounters these women experienced required solutions in order for them to move forward. Descriptions of how these women went about resolving these issues are addressed.

These themes are embedded in the research questions the study was seeking to answer.

While a sample of 18 female international graduate women does not lend itself to broad generalizations and sweeping conclusions, this research does raise some important questions and suggests possible directions for further inquiry on how institutions of higher education can best help students of other nationalities.

Discussion

For the most part international students come to the states because their aspirations reach a level at which they cannot be satisfied by local opportunities. With this desire to advance oneself comes migration and its consequences. Bell (1980) discusses how migration is more than population redistribution. He suggests that it leads to such attributes as social, occupational or religious restructuring of self. It brings about changes in social relationships and cultural values. The tendency is to modify or reject customs and discipline of origin. Roots (1978) talks about how the sentiment about the place of origin becomes articulated after departure from that place.

The participants in this study indicated how migration affected them during their stay here. The culture differentiation was a big factor for which evidence was provided in homesickness in some and isolation others. Here Tsitsi describes how she felt after her visit home:

Then I went back home for a vacation and spent a month there, and then I came back and I felt really really homesick; I don't remember feeling homesick when I first came here. I've had difficulty adjusting a little bit after I went home for

vacation. I think the reason is that I hadn't realized how long I had been away from my family and how things had changed so much there. When I came here, to me their lives stopped where I left them. Children had grown up, and people were doing different things with their lives. When I came here the second time, I felt a little bit sad and anxious at the same time that I was missing so much there.

Many of the students felt that they were living in isolation. The following are comments on how they felt about the way of living here:

I learned very quickly that this society was not that kind of personal society where you pay attention to interactions and detailed names.

Tsitsi's observation was that "people here are so much into themselves. There is so much individualism and it is very difficult to make friends." Choni agreed:

I have learned to be more by myself because people tend to want to live private lives you know. I feel like I am living in isolation.

Thus the whole process of migration impacted an individual's well-being. This can be viewed as part of the events that lead to a transformation. Once the migration has taken place, one has to reevaluate one's assumptions. Even though people at times try to resist the change that comes along with migration, it is inevitable that one has to deal with the situation that they find themselves in in order to move forward.

Many of the problems international students faced ranged from social to educational. Socially, students faced problems such as getting divorced while being here, not being able to make true friendships, and being discriminated against. Educationally, students

faced problems in regards to different ways of spelling, pronunciation, speaking with an accent, and using computers. Most of these women had gone through a British system of education. Sometimes it was difficult for them to understand the professors and for them to be understood. Another general observation was that of being put down by the very people they were looking up to, as well as differential treatment by professors of African students in comparison to their counterparts. Some of these problems might seem trivial, but they cannot be separated from the same individual trying to accomplish some set goals.

The ability of foreign students to cope with the drastic changes in their life styles and adapting to a different environment and culture depends on the individual student. To restate part of Mezirow's transformation theory, it emphasizes the realization that it is not so much what happens to people but how they interpret and explain what happens to them that determines their actions and hopes. Fréire (1970) described the concept of "conscientization" as a process by which adults "achieve a deepening awareness of both the sociocultural reality which shapes their lives and their capacity to transform that reality through action upon it" (p. 27). This helps us understand how these problems or obstacles can be viewed as building blocks to transformation. The problems students encounter lead to changes in their perspectives about the world in general and takes them to another level of problem solving.

The problems one faces sets a stage for the individual to become critically reflective. Any major challenge to an established perspective can result in a transformation. Some of these challenges are painful, they can often call into question deeply held personal values and threaten the very sense of self. In his book on Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning, Mezirow (1991) stated that anything that moves the individual toward a more inclusive, differentiated, permeable and integrated meaning perspective aids in adult development, the validity of which would have come through rational discourse. Hence, the different types of troublesome events these women experienced were trigger events that led to transformations.

In this study there were some major belief shifts in the women who had experienced a transformation. Some of these belief shifts were recognizing the options of divorcing an abusive husband even though he was the sole provider, recognizing that there were options for ways of thinking and acting and that one had choices to make. Vickie describes the circumstances of her divorce:

I was six thousand miles away from home with no family support, and I had just come, I had barely been here. I didn't have my own support system; I didn't have my feet on the ground so to speak. Like I said earlier on, not only was I having to deal with the fact that my family was falling apart but also I had to deal with a lot of physical pain because that was what necessitated the divorce, the physical abuse that I had to endure. So I was going through a lot of physical pain and a lot of emotional things. Economically it was economic suicide for me, because my ex-husband was the one person that I was dependent on for everything. But

I had made up my mind to change my situation despite the consequences.

Shingai came to the understanding that having a relationship and being a wife and a mother did not preclude having a career. She says:

Of course after a number of years, I started having kids and that made the problem worse because with kids you really need more money for child care. My husband wasn't very interested. He wasn't ready to help. I wanted you know, to go to school. I knew I was capable of whatever I set my mind to, and I was interested. I really knew that getting a higher education would help me, so I guess I did.

As a student, the number one challenge was getting my finances in line, because I had to go to school, go to work, and come back and take care of my family. That was a big challenge for me. I used to go to school in the mornings. I made sure I didn't go beyond twelve. I would then come home and cook and get the house clean. When the kids came home, I would go to work. Most of my studying was done inbetween times.

By having an interest in the way she dressed and participated in social gatherings, Pam was able to reinforce her culture. She was able to show a different perspective:

I decided to look at it from a different point of view. I decided to keep my identity, like whenever there was a gathering, I always wore my national clothes, cooked foods from my country, and displayed something from my country. So, I found that it is helpful to them and that made them appreciate other people.

Mukai recognized the option of choosing what to embrace or reject between the two cultures:

I had been exposed to the American culture and my culture when I was growing up. So I already had a notion about certain things and how they could happen. So I was prepared for that. Like I said, I had to pick and choose things from the two cultures.

Tsitsi was ready to take a major role as an agent of change upon return to her country. Here she describes a visit to her country:

When I went home to visit, I was more critical of the way I look at things. It upset me to see my colleagues sacrificing their careers because they were married. These women were a lot more intelligent than their men and would probably be a lot more successful. They just adjust their lives to suit their husbands. It's like they are programmed once they get married. Maybe I can influence them in some way so that maybe things would be a little bit different.

Not all the women interviewed in this study experienced a transformation. However, the ones that did ultimately came to rely on themselves to make changes in their lives and they all seemed to have come out better people than they were before the transformation took place. The findings show an increase in competence and self-confidence after going through troubled times. Here is how Shingai felt after her divorce:

In a way you know I knew I was just being used by my ex-husband and I knew it, but I didn't have the courage to stand up for myself. So the divorce was a good thing. It made me grow up a lot. It was scary at first but it made me discover certain strengths in me that I didn't know I had you know.

Theoretical Implications

The interviews demonstrated that during their sojourn, these women may have experienced transformations. These experiences were triggered by events in and outside of their educational settings. The interviews enabled these women to reflect on their lives, express their feelings, and to share their frustrations in life they had not shared with anyone.

Mezirow's (1991) perspective transformation can be broken down into three dimensions: becoming critically aware of how and why our assumptions have come to constrain the way we perceive, understand and feel about our world; changing these structures of habitual expectation to be more inclusive, discriminating and integrative; and to make choices of acting based on these new understandings. The experiences that these women had of migration, culture shock and many others suggest that their transformation was initiated by some perspective they held and it was triggered by an event. Mezirow refers to this as a disorienting dilemma in which old ways of knowing do not make sense any more. In stage two of the theory, the individual learns to be more inclusive, discriminating, and integrative based on the encountered dilemmas. In this study these women began to form networks as a way of being inclusive, discriminating, and integrative in seeking clarity to a seemingly confusing state of affairs. The third dimension of the theory is when one makes choices and acts upon them. The stories that these women shared had elements of Mezirow's perspective transformation theory, becoming aware of the context and origin of one's personal perspective, questioning one's perspective, and exploring alternative perspectives. This study included the context in which the transformations took place in that these women brought with them assumptions and beliefs of how life was like for them as young girls and women in their own countries. Their assumptions of knowing became threatened by the encounter of the new culture and environment. This

led to a reassessment of previously held assumptions and beliefs. The inconsistencies between the perspectives they held and the events they experienced initiated the transformations. These experiences stimulated them to think about previous perspectives which led them to seek new alternative perspectives. They based their future decisions and actions on the revised perspective.

The one weakness of the theory is that it fails to include the context within which the transformation takes place. However, this study included the context within which the research took place.

Taylor (1993) suggests that his model on Intercultural Competency: A Transformative Learning Process can be linked to perspective transformation by three dimensions. The dimensions are that of a catalyst for change, a process, and as an outcome. The concepts for perspective transformation and intercultural competency seem to be intricately linked. They both explain the stages which these women went through in reaching a changed perspective of self and others. This theory enables us to expand our knowledge of female international graduate students from Africa. By hearing their stories from their own perspectives and acting upon them, we can help create a better understanding of ourselves and others.

This study adds to the empirical evidence that international students experience feelings of alienation during their sojourn, and that transformation occurs as a consequence of this alienation. This alienation can be a result of the environment, culture differentiation, racism and many other such things which Mezirow

classifies as trigger events. It is, however, hoped that more studies on how best these students can be helped will be conducted.

Implications of Study

This study has attempted to show what happens to female graduate women when they migrate to a different culture for the purposes of higher education. It goes on to substantiate the problems they face and how they go about resolving these problems in order for them to reach their goals.

The importance of this study is two-fold. First, it enabled some international students to articulate what is important to them and what areas they consider troublesome and would like help in. This is important in that it helps both parties involved to be operating on the same premise. Many times people operate on assumptions about what they think things ought to be and that might not necessarily be what the individual needs.

Secondly, if taken through the right channels, the information can be helpful to college student personnel and professors who work with international students. By being sensitized to transformative theory, professors, faculty and college student personnel can be more helpful to international students as they engage in the process of adjusting to life in the United States. This will also help the college personnel staff to create a climate that would nurture and enhance international understanding and promote interaction.

Some Suggestions for Easing the Transition

Sponsoring organizations can play a role in familiarizing international students with the United States by holding seminars or workshops prior to their departure. For those students who are not sponsored, the American embassies in their countries can act as the sponsoring agent.

Also, institutions of higher education should sensitize professors and their support staff about international understanding by requiring them to attend seminars which address international issues. Many international students bottle a lot of anger and frustrations because they do not want to jeopardize their programs. Establishment of a grievance process through faculty or professors international students consider "safe" would help keep a good rapport between the professors and the students.

Recommendations

It is recommended that institutions of higher education:

1. expose professors, student personnel, and faculty to the concerns of international students during inservice training and/or retreats,
2. target particular groups of international students during orientation programs based on need,
3. include in their hiring practices people with international understanding, and
4. conduct similar studies with other populations (e.g., male graduate international students). This would help compare and

contrast whether male students have similar problems and how they resolve them.

Because many adaptation problems of foreign students remain relatively unknown to academic and support staff, workshops should be arranged for university personnel who are in daily contact with foreign students, including instructors, to help them understand the adaptation problems of international students and to develop encouraging and supportive response patterns.

Concluding Thoughts

The in-depth interviews used in this study were very enriching and rewarding. Enriching in that it made me hear these women's stories from their own perspectives which would not have come through had conventional methods been used. Rewarding in that by listening to what these women had to say made me reevaluate my own life, what is important to me, and what this whole experience of coming to America has meant to me as an individual.

These women share much in common in that they all migrated from Africa and that either by choice or circumstances found themselves pursuing higher education at Iowa State University. Their problems basically dealt with adjusting and adapting to a new culture and environment during their sojourn. The interviews highlighted the reality that there is a transformation that takes place in people as they migrate to a culture and environment different from their own. Some of the transformations in this study were very subtle, whereas some were obvious. However pronounced or subtle, there was an

underlying factor that there was some change that had taken place within that individual's lifestyle in order for them to carry on. Although it looks like these women paint a gloomy picture of Iowa State, all in all they have come out more knowledgeable, confident of themselves, and more self-reliant. Rudo ended the interview by saying:

I have liked it here all the same. Through my experiences I have got to know people. I have met so many other people I would not otherwise have met, so my social network has broadened. I have gained, there is much to be gained. The whole experience has made me a better person. I look at life more openly now.

Although the university has a student counseling office and an international student office, many African international students do not utilize these offices. It seems as though there is a need for an organized support network for African international students. Here Anesu comments about the student counseling office:

I have been to the counseling office, but it's not the same. They don't understand me and it has not been helpful to me, so I don't go there anymore.

This led me to believe that currently there is not such a network where African students feel free to express their grievances openly.

Mukai expressed her thoughts on the topic by saying:

I wish that I could get closer to more of the African graduate women. I wish we could have some kind of a get together that we could get to talk about some of these things. We can be a support for each other, act as a support group you know. So far I haven't seen that happen.

In conclusion, if education is truly the key to a better world, then differences among students in color, culture, language and

religion should be valued, nurtured, and transformed into profitable learning experiences for all (Trujillo, 1988). The environment for learning can be as important as the content itself. The faculty, staff and the community with whom the students come into contact can contribute to the betterment of the individual and can promote world peace, understanding and tolerance.

REFERENCES

- Abou-Seada, H. S. (1970). Migration pattern and its relation to the socio-economic factors. Unpublished Master's thesis, Iowa State University of Science and Technology, Ames.
- Adler, P. S. (1975). The transitional experience: An alternative view of culture shock. Journal of Humanistic Psychology, 15(4), 13-23.
- Antanaitis, C. A. (1990). Cultural variances as they affect classroom performance and behavior of foreign graduate students in education. Dissertation Abstracts International, 51(4), 1127-A.
- Barnett, R. C., Beiner, L., & Baruch, G. K. (1987). Gender and stress. New York: Free Press.
- Becker, T. (1968). Patterns of attitudinal changes among foreign students. The Journal of Sociology, 73(4), 431-442.
- Befus, C. P. (1988). A multilevel treatment approach for culture shock experienced by sojourners. International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 12, 381-400.
- Bell, M. (1980). Past mobility and spatial preferences for migration in East Africa. In P. E. White & R. I. Woods (Eds.), The geographical impact of migration (pp. 84-107). New York.
- Bochner, S. (1972). Problems in culture learning. In S. Bochner & P. Wicks (Eds.), Overseas students in Australia. Auburn: New South Wales University Press.
- Bowlby, J. (1961). Process of mourning. International Journal of Psycho-Analysis, 42, 317-340.
- Boyd, R. D., & Myers, J. G. (1988). Transformative education. International Journal of Lifelong Education, 7(4), 261-284.
- Castle, E. B. (1966). Growing up in East Africa. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Church, A. T. (1982). Sojourner adjustment. Psychological Bulletin, 91(3), 540-572.
- Clark, M. C., & Wilson, A. I. (1990). Through the paradigm: An analysis of Mezirow's theory of adult learning. Paper presented at the Adult Education Research Conference, Athens, Georgia.

- Clark, M. C., & Wilson, A. I. (1991). Context and rationality in Mezirow's theory of transformational learning. Adult Education Quarterly, 41(2), 75-91.
- Collard, S., & Law, M. (1989). The limits of perspective transformation: A critique of Mezirow's theory. Adult Education Quarterly, 39(2), 99-107.
- Denford, J. (1981). Going away. International Review of Psycho-Analytic Journal, 8, 325-332.
- DeVryer, M. A. (1989). Leaving, loving, and longing: A developmental perspective of migration. Journal of American College Health, 38(1), 75-80.
- Digest of Educational Statistics. (1991). The condition of education. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Table 194.
- Dodge, S. (1990, March 7). Culture shock and alienation remain problems for many foreign students on U.S. campuses. The Chronicle of Higher Education, pp. A33, A36.
- Durojaiye, S. M., & Donald, G. A. H. (1984). Students, wives and mothers: Mature women overseas students. Higher Education Review, 16(3), 57-69.
- Foust, S. (Ed.). (1981). Dynamics of cross-cultural adjustment: From pre-arrival to re-entry. In G. Althen (Ed.), Learning cross cultures. International Communication and International Educational Exchange (7-28). Washington, D.C.: National Association for Foreign Student Affairs.
- Freire, P. (1970b). Cultural action for freedom. Monograph Series No. I. Cambridge, Mass. Harvard Education Review and Center for the Study of Development and Social Change.
- Freud, S. (1917). Mourning and melancholia. Standard Edition, 14:239-258. London: Hogarth Press, 1957. Quoted in Garza, Guerrero, A. C. Culture shock. Its mourning and the vicissitudes of identity. Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association, 22(2), 1974, 408-429.
- Friessm, D. H. (1974). Migration. Neurology Medical Psychology, 26, 78-90.
- Galbraith, M. W. (Ed.). (1990). Adult learning methods. Malabar, Florida: Robert E. Krieger Publishing Company.

- Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research. New York: Aldine Publishing Company.
- Goetz, J. P., & LeCompte, M. D. (1984). Ethnography and qualitative design in educational research. Orlando, FL: Academic Press.
- Goodwin, C. D., & Nacht, M. (1983). Absence of decision (Research Report No. 1). New York: Institute of International Education.
- Gould, R. L. (1990). The therapeutic learning program. In J. Mezirow & Associates, Fostering critical reflection in adulthood: A guide to transformative and emancipatory learning (pp. 134-156). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Griswold, W. (1982). Education as transformation: Commentary and replies. Transformation and remembrance. Harvard Educational Review, 52(1), 45-53.
- Guerrero-Garza, A. C. (1974). Culture shock: Its mourning and the vicissitudes of identity. Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association, 22(2), 408-428.
- Guerrero-Garza, A. C. (1989). Developmental perspective of migration. College Health, 38, 80-85.
- Heikinheimo, P. S., & Shute, I. C. M. (1986). The adaptation of foreign students: Student views and institutional implications. Journal of College Student Personnel, September, 399-406.
- Henslin, J. M. (1991). Down to earth sociology. New York: The Free Press.
- Higher Education General Information Survey. (1984). Residence and migration of college students (Report No. CS 86-326B). Center for Educational Statistics (OERI/ED), Washington, D.C.
- Hughes, M. (1990, March 7). Culture shock and alienation remain problems for many foreign students on U.S. campuses. The Chronicle of Higher Education, pp. 1, A36.
- Hunter, E. K. (1980). Perspective transformation in health practices: A study in adult learning and fundamental life change. Dissertation Abstracts International, 41(01), 62-A.
- Hutton, C. (1973). Reluctant farmers? A study of unemployment and planned rural development in Uganda. Nairobi: East African Publishing House.

- Jung, C. G. (1969). Stages of life. In Collected Works, The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche, Vol. 8, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Karpiak, I. E. (1981). Transformation and self-renewal at midlife: Change patterns, curriculum possibilities. Continuing Education Division, The University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Canada.
- Kelly, G. P., & Elliott, C. M. (Eds.). (1981). Women's education in the third world: Comparative perspectives. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Leong, F. T., Mallinckrodt, B., & Krolj, M. M. (1990). Cross-cultural variations in stress and adjustment among Asian and Caucasian graduate students. Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 18, 19-28.
- Leong, T. L., & Sedlacek, W. E. (1989). Academic and career needs of international and United States college students. Journal of College Student Development, 3(30), 106-111.
- Locke, D. C., & Velasco, J. (1987). Hospitality begins with the invitation: Counseling foreign students. Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 17, 115-119.
- Lysgaard, S. (1955). Adjustment in a foreign society: Norwegian Fulbright grantees visiting the United States. International Social Science Bulletin, 7, 44-51.
- Marks, M. S. (1987). Preparing international students in the United States for reentering the home country. Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 7, 120-126.
- Marshall-Bradley, T. (1992). The adaptation of Afrikan students to Iowa State (Doctoral dissertation, Iowa State University). Dissertation Abstracts International, 53(3), 742-A.
- Mezirow, J. (1953). Youth awakens a sleepy town. Adult Leadership, 1(9), 6-8.
- Mezirow, J. (1975). Education for perspective transformation: Women's reentry programs in community colleges. New York: Center for Adult Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, 168-9.
- Mezirow, J. (1975). Evaluating statewide programs of adult education: A design with instrumentation. New York: Center for Adult Development, Teachers College, Columbia University.

- Mezirow, J. (1978). Education for perspective transformation: Women's re-entry programs in community colleges. New York: Center for Adult Education, Teachers College, Columbia University.
- Mezirow, J. (1981). Transformative dimensions of adult learning. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Mezirow, J. (1991). Transformative dimensions of adult learning. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Miller, M. H. (1981). Psychotherapy and foreign students. In P. B. Pedersen, J. L. Draguns, W. J. Lonner, & Trimble (Eds.), Counseling cross cultures (rev. ed.) (pp. 227-243). Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii.
- Morgan, J. (1987). Displaced homemaker programs: The transition from homemaker to independent person. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Teachers College, Columbia University.
- Oei, T. P. S., & Notowidjojo, F. (1990). Depression and loneliness in overseas students. The International Journal of Social Psychiatry, 36(2), 121-130.
- Parr, G., Bradley, L., & Bingi, R. (1992). Concerns and feelings of international students. Journal of College Student Development, 33(1), 20-25.
- Patton, Q. M. (1981). Practical evaluation. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Patton, Q. M. (1990). Qualitative evaluation and research methods (2nd ed.). Newbury Park, London: Sage.
- Perls, F. (1969). Gestalt therapy verbatim. New York: Bantam Books.
- Piaget, J. (1967). Six psychological studies. New York: Random House.
- Pruitt, F. J. (1978). The adaptation of African students to American society. International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 2(1), 90-116.
- Roots, R. S. (1978). The cultural gains and losses of migration. In W. H. McNeal & R. S. Adams (Eds.), Human migration patterns and policies (pp. 404-462). Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

- Schram, J. L., & Lauver, P. J. (1988). Alienation in international students. Journal of College Student Development, 3(29), 146-150.
- Sivard, R. L. (1987). Women . . . a world survey. Washington, DC: World Priorities.
- Stern, C. (1988). Some methodological notes on the study of human migration. In C. W. Stahl (Ed.), International migration today (pp. 28-45). Unesco: University of Western Australia.
- Stoyhoff, S. J. (1990). English language proficiency and study strategies as determinants of academic success for international students in U.S. universities. Dissertation Abstracts International, 52(1), 97-A.
- Taylor, E. W. (1993). Intercultural competency: A transformative learning process. Paper presented at the 34th Annual Adult Education Research Conference, Pennsylvania State University.
- The Random House Dictionary of the English Language. (1987). (2nd edition). Unabridged. New York: Random House.
- Trujillo, Francis X. (1988). If education was truly a priority. Pro Teach, Sacramento, CA.
- Wahidy, H. E. (1990, March 7). In Dodge, Culture shock and alienation remain problems for many foreign students on U.S. campuses. The Chronicle of Higher Education, pp. A33, A36.
- Wehrly, B. (1988). Cultural diversity from an international perspective. Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 16, 3-15.
- White, P. E., & Woods, R. I. (1980). The foundations of migration study. In P. E. White & R. I. Woods (Eds.), The geographical impact of migration (pp. 2-7). New York.
- Williams, G. H. (1986). Perspective transformation as an adult learning theory to explain and facilitate change in male spouse abusers. Dissertation Abstracts International, 47(01), 58-A.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my major professor, Dr. John Philip Wilson, for his insightful comments and suggestions throughout my Ph.D. program. I would also like to thank members of my committee, Dr. Don Goering, Dr. Eric Hoiberg, Dr. Nancy Naples, and Dr. William Wolansky, for their constructive comments and suggestions. A special thanks goes to Dr. Nancy Naples for her guidance in conducting a qualitative research study.

A very special thanks goes to Dr. George Jackson (Minority Student Affairs), without whom my stay at Iowa State University would have been virtually impossible.

I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to Dr. Gary Tartakov and Dr. Sally Williams, who substituted for Dr. Wolansky and Dr. Goering, who were unable to attend my final oral defense due to extenuating circumstances.

I am especially grateful to the eighteen women who agreed to be interviewed and to share their stories with me. Thanks goes to Judy Jarboe, my typist, for the marvelous job she did typing this dissertation--sometimes at very short notice.

My sincere thanks goes to my family (immediate and extended) and friends for being there for me emotionally and financially. To my two sons, Fungai and Tendai, thank you for your understanding--having a student for a mother.

APPENDIX A. HUMAN SUBJECTS APPROVAL FORM

Information for Review of Research Involving Human Subjects

Iowa State University

(Please type and use the attached instructions for completing this form)

123

1. Title of Project The transformation process of female graduate students from Africa studying at Iowa State University
2. I agree to provide the proper surveillance of this project to insure that the rights and welfare of the human subjects are protected. I will report any adverse reactions to the committee. Additions to or changes in research procedures after the project has been approved will be submitted to the committee for review. I agree to request renewal of approval for any project continuing more than one year.

Miriam Chiza-Muyengwa 11-16-92 M. Chiza-Muyengwa
Typed Name of Principal Investigator Date Signature of Principal Investigator

Professional Studies N243 Lagomarcino 294-4143
Department Campus Address Campus Telephone

3. Signatures of other investigators Date Relationship to Principal Investigator
- [Signature] 11/24/92 Major Professor
- [Signature] 11/30/92 Qualitative Research Professor

4. Principal Investigator(s) (check all that apply)
☐ Faculty ☐ Staff ☒ Graduate Student ☐ Undergraduate Student
5. Project (check all that apply)
☐ Research ☒ Thesis or dissertation ☐ Class project ☐ Independent Study (490, 590, Honors project)
6. Number of subjects (complete all that apply)
___ # Adults, non-students 20 # ISU student ___ # minors under 14 ___ other (explain)
___ # minors 14 - 17

7. Brief description of proposed research involving human subjects: (See instructions, Item 7. Use an additional page if needed.)

This study proposes to investigate how transformative theory is manifested in female graduate students from Africa studying at Iowa State University. The study will focus on experiences of culture shock, inner turmoil, and troubled times as trigger events that precipitate critical reflection and transformations. Using grounded theory methodology, the study will utilize indepth interviews as a way of data collection. Because the researcher is interested in personal experiences of these female graduate students, purposive sampling will be used. The researcher will use the interpretive methodology to analyze the data.

(Please do not send research, thesis, or dissertation proposals.)

8. Informed Consent: ☒ Signed informed consent will be obtained. (Attach a copy of your form.)
☐ Modified informed consent will be obtained. (See instructions, item 8.)
☐ Not applicable to this project.

9. Confidentiality of Data: Describe below the methods to be used to ensure the confidentiality of data obtained. (See instructions, item 9.)

124

The participants will be asked to read the informed consent form which states that the information they give will only be used for research purposes and that no individual's real name or identifying information will be used in any presentation of the findings. Pseudo names will be used to present the data.

10. What risks or discomfort will be part of the study? Will subjects in the research be placed at risk or incur discomfort? Describe any risks to the subjects and precautions that will be taken to minimize them. (The concept of risk goes beyond physical risk and includes risks to subjects' dignity and self-respect as well as psychological or emotional risk. See instructions, item 10.)

I don't see any risks or discomforts as part of the study. However, my informed consent form states that the participants can stop the audiotaping at any point of the interview if they do not want certain portions of the interview to be audiotaped.

11. CHECK ALL of the following that apply to your research:

- ☐ A. Medical clearance necessary before subjects can participate
- ☐ B. Samples (Blood, tissue, etc.) from subjects
- ☐ C. Administration of substances (foods, drugs, etc.) to subjects
- ☐ D. Physical exercise or conditioning for subjects
- ☐ E. Deception of subjects
- ☐ F. Subjects under 14 years of age and/or ☐ Subjects 14 - 17 years of age
- ☐ G. Subjects in institutions (nursing homes, prisons, etc.)
- ☐ H. Research must be approved by another institution or agency (Attach letters of approval)

If you checked any of the items in 11, please complete the following in the space below (include any attachments):

Items A - D Describe the procedures and note the safety precautions being taken.

Item E Describe how subjects will be deceived; justify the deception; indicate the debriefing procedure, including the timing and information to be presented to subjects.

Item F For subjects under the age of 14, indicate how informed consent from parents or legally authorized representatives as well as from subjects will be obtained.

Items G & H Specify the agency or institution that must approve the project. If subjects in any outside agency or institution are involved, approval must be obtained prior to beginning the research, and the letter of approval should be filed.

Checklist for Attachments and Time Schedule

The following are attached (please check):

12. ☒ Letter or written statement to subjects indicating clearly:
- a) purpose of the research
 - b) the use of any identifier codes (names, #'s), how they will be used, and when they will be removed (see Item 17)
 - c) an estimate of time needed for participation in the research and the place
 - d) if applicable, location of the research activity
 - e) how you will ensure confidentiality
 - f) in a longitudinal study, note when and how you will contact subjects later
 - g) participation is voluntary; nonparticipation will not affect evaluations of the subject
13. ☒ Consent form (if applicable)
14. ☐ Letter of approval for research from cooperating organizations or institutions (if applicable)
15. ☐ Data-gathering instruments

16. Anticipated dates for contact with subjects:

First Contact

Last Contact

12-1-92

2-29-93

Month / Day / Year

Month / Day / Year

17. If applicable: anticipated date that identifiers will be removed from completed survey instruments and/or audio or visual tapes will be erased:

8-30-1993

Month / Day / Year

18. Signature of Departmental Executive Officer

Date

Department or Administrative Unit

[Signature]

11/21/92

19. Decision of the University Human Subjects Review Committee:

☒ Project Approved ☐ Project Not Approved ☐ No Action Required

Patricia M. Keith

Name of Committee Chairperson

12/3/92
Date

pm/Keith
Signature of Committee Chairperson

The committee has requested that miriam indicate the amount of time needed for participation in the letter. she has agreed to do so. she has included the amount of time in the informed consent which will be given to the subjects prior to the interview.

GC:1/90

- Per miriam Chiza-Muyengwa, P.I.
12/1/92

APPENDIX B. LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS

Professional Studies in Education
N225 Lagomarcino

November 16, 1992

1304 Hawthorn Court
Ames, Iowa 50010
296-8270

Dear Colleague,

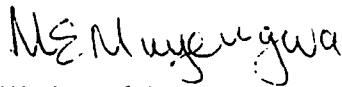
I am a graduate student in Professional Studies in Education studying adult and extension education. I obtained your name from a listing of international students studying at Iowa State University, provided to me by the International Student Office on campus.

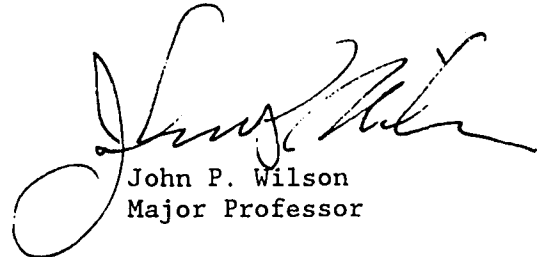
My research study is on African graduate women studying at Iowa State University. This study involves talking with you about how life was like for you before you came to the states, why you chose to come, and how life has been for you here. The interview takes approximately one and one-half hours.

I will be contacting you within the first two weeks of December to set up some time that will be convenient for you to meet with me.

Your participation is very important to me. I hope you'll agree to be part of this research project.

Sincerely,


Miriam Chiza-Muyengwa
Graduate Student


John P. Wilson
Major Professor

APPENDIX C. INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

INTERVIEW #	NAME	DATE	TIME
1	Pam	December 17, 1992	9:30-12:00 p.m.
2	Tina	December 31, 1992	11:00- 1:00 p.m.
3	Rudo	January 6, 1993	10:30-12:30 p.m.
4	Jackie	January 7, 1993	2:00- 4:00 p.m.
5	Chipo	January 8, 1993	6:00- 8:00 p.m.
6	Vickie	January 10, 1993	1:00- 3:00 p.m.
7	Tsitsi	January 11, 1993	11:00- 1:00 p.m.
8	Dede	January 11, 1993	2:00- 4:00 p.m.
9	Choni	January 14, 1993	11:00- 1:00 p.m.
10	Alice	January 14, 1993	7:00- 9:00 p.m.
11	Irene	January 15, 1993	6:00- 8:00 p.m.
12	Ebba	January 17, 1993	2:00- 4:00 p.m.
13	Shingai	January 21, 1993	6:00- 8:00 p.m.
14	Farai	February 2, 1993	2:00- 4:00 p.m.
15	Lisa	February 5, 1993	9:00-11:00 p.m.
16	Rufaro	February 8, 1993	1:00- 3:00 p.m.
17	Anesu	February 16, 1993	8:00-10:00 a.m.
18	Mukai	February 28, 1993	1:00- 3:00 p.m.

APPENDIX D. CONSENT FORM

PURPOSE: To gather in-depth information on how life was for female graduate students from Africa in their countries before coming to the states, what prompted them to come to the states, and how life has been at Iowa State University.

NAME OF INVESTIGATOR: Miriam Chiza-Muyengwa

NAME OF RESPONDENT:

ADDRESS:

TELEPHONE:

The main purpose for this interview is to gather in-depth information on your experiences as a foreign student at Iowa State University.

Questions will deal with what life was like in your country, your decisions to come to Iowa State, how you prepared to come, your expectations, your experience when you got here, your life socially and educationally, and the problems you encountered and how you solved them. The interview will take approximately two hours.

Your participation is completely voluntary and you may decide not to participate at any time. The information you give me will be strictly confidential and will only be used for research purposes. No individual's name or any other identifying information will be used in any presentation of the findings. Pseudo names will be used to present the data should the need arise. I hope you will be willing to answer all the questions, but if there are any you would rather not answer feel free to tell me.

I would also like your permission to audiotape the interview. This helps me to keep an accurate record of your thoughts and experiences. Your name will not appear on the tape recording or any transcription of the recording. At any time during the interview, if you do not wish the audiotape to record what you are saying, please let me know.

INFORMED CONSENT FOR RESEARCH:

I have read the description of the research study. I have also talked it over with the researcher to my satisfaction. I understand that my participation is voluntary. I know enough about the purpose, methods, risks and benefits of the research study to participate in the research study.

PARTICIPANT'S SIGNATURE

APPENDIX E. POSITIVE/NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF STUDY

POSITIVE/NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF STUDY

- It was a good forum for airing concerns and feelings.
- Was a very enriching and eye-opening experience for me. It gave me a different perspective of looking at people and life in general.
- My status as a female graduate student from Africa made the interviews less intimidating.
- Length of time seemed to be a problem when I was setting up the interview schedule, but once they were there most of the interviews went longer than I had anticipated.
- Two participants had short, brief answers. They were not able to open up.
- A few were uneasy about audiotaping. One asked not to be audiotaped.
- At present there is no forum where these women are comfortable enough to express their problems and feelings during their stay here.